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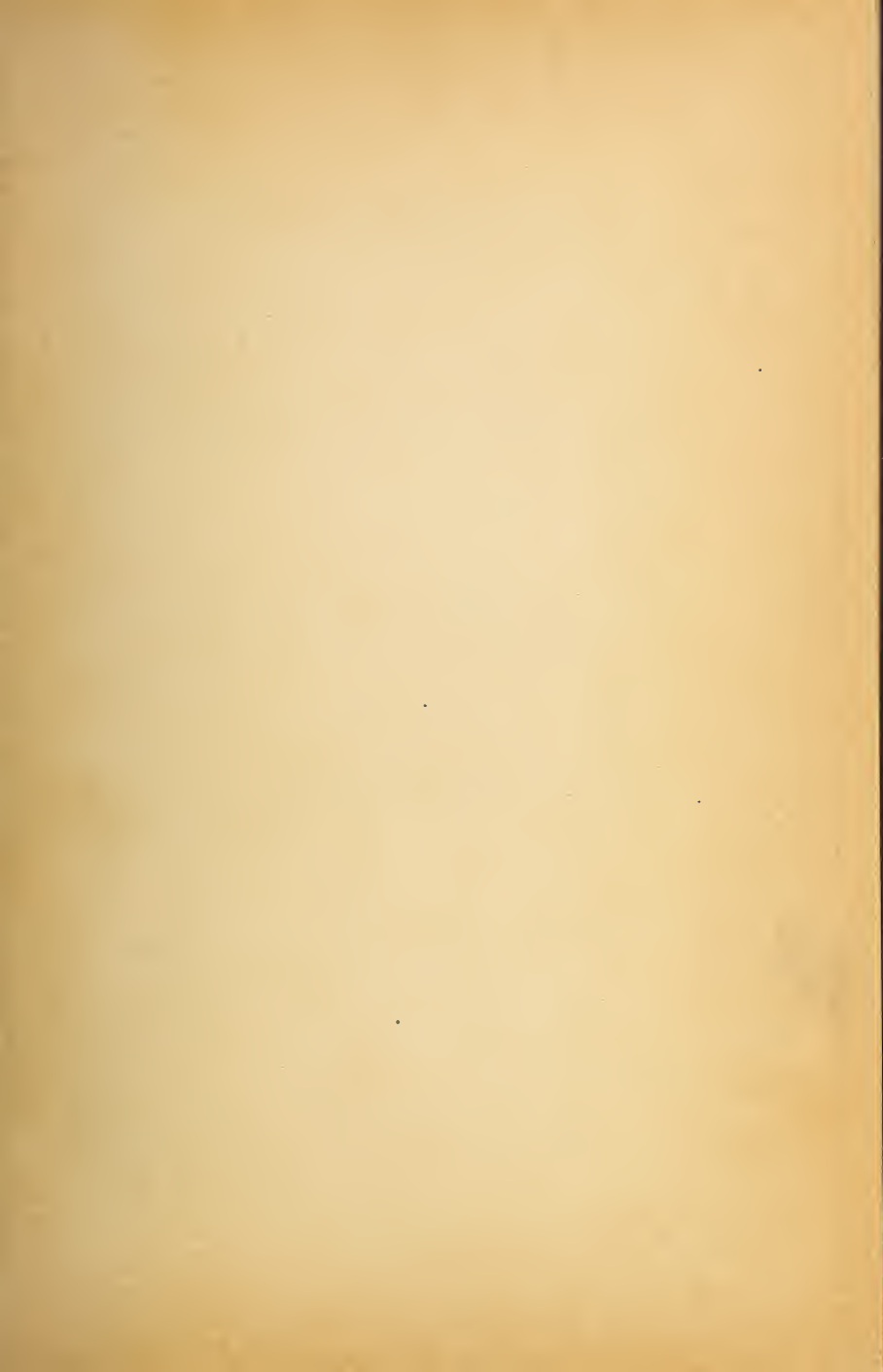
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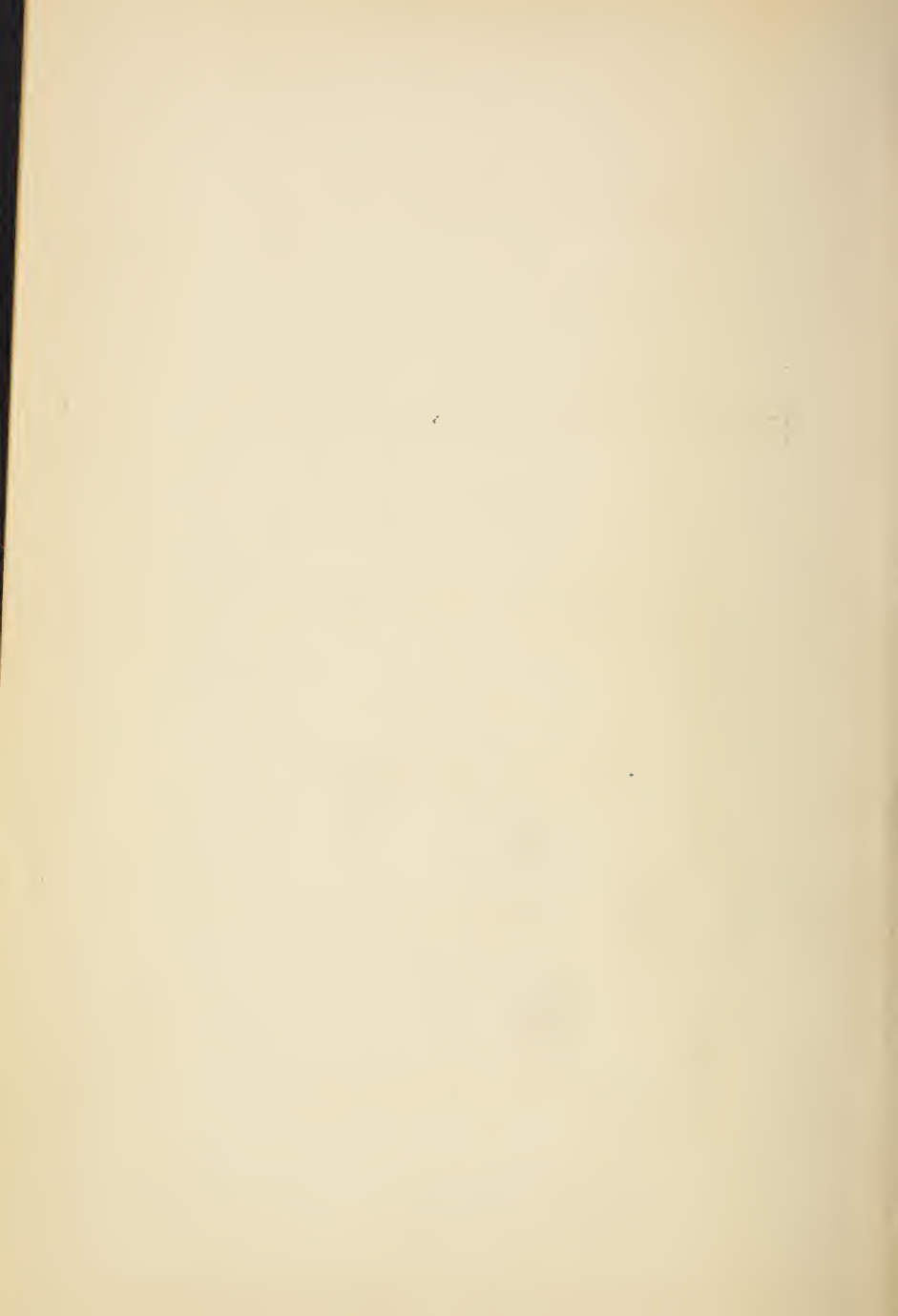
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.













JESUS CHRIST

—AS A—

BUSINESS MAN

—OR—

The Ministry of Property

• —BY—

✓  
J. NESBIT WILSON

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FIRST EDITION

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CLEVELAND, OHIO:

THE WILLIAMS PUBLISHING AND ELECTRIC COMPANY.

1896.

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"The Gospel is not a book; it is a living being, with an action, a power, which invades every thing that opposes its extension. I never omit to read it, and every day with the same pleasure. Everything in Jesus Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me and His will confounds me. Between Him and whoever else in the world there is no possible terms of comparison. He is truly a being by Himself. Jesus borrowed nothing from science. One can absolutely find nowhere, but in Him alone, the imitation of the example of His life. In fact, the sciences and philosophy avail nothing for salvation; and Jesus came into the world to reveal the mysteries of heaven and the laws of the spirit. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal reign of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved, adored, and which is extending all over the earth! Is this to die? Is it not rather to live? The death of Christ—it is the death of God." For a moment the Emperor was silent. As General Bertrand made no reply, he solemnly added, "If you do not perceive that Jesus Christ is God, very well; then I did wrong to make you a general."

NAPOLÉON BONAPARTE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE subject of our book is, "Jesus Christ as a Business Man; or, The Ministry of Property." The Scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ was the son of a carpenter, and that He was a carpenter. Never did labor receive so high honor as when He took up the axe and the adze, the chisel and the plane. Had you seen Him bargaining for His labor, delivering the finished work to its owner, you would have seen the Master of all tradesmen doing business. But this applies to Him and to His life before His public ministry began, and it is not to this part of His life that we wish to call attention or give emphasis in our book.

His public ministry, His dealing with men for time and eternity, enlarging upon His teachings in regard to the ministry of property, is the subject of the following pages. It is true that Jesus Christ was a minister in the highest sense of the word, and it is also true that He was a business man, who never had His equal or one that can compare with Him. His dealings with men include and reveal a perfect and complete business policy. From His first sermon up in Nazareth till He ascended into heaven, every word and move was in the line of the highest ideal of practical business. Take His whole plan of salvation, from the time Adam and Eve fell till the last sinner saved shall be within the gates of the New Jerusalem, and every step is marked with the highest type that business can assume or take. There is nothing in all the commercial world which compares with the scheme of redemption, not only in the vastness of its proportions, but in the practical

## INTRODUCTION.

workings of its every detail. It is the crystallization of a perfect business scheme. In it Jesus Christ has shown Himself to be, not only the greatest, but the highest type of a business man of whom the world has any knowledge. His great announcement is most emphatically true here, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

If we, in our social intercourse, take Him and His life as our pattern, and in the business world transact our business as He dealt and deals with men, we have the remedy for all our commercial and social wrongs at hand; while business life on earth will have attained its perfection. Elements are in the plan of redemption, which, if applied to our business world, would adjust all our difficulties between labor and capital, the employe and the employer. There is not a good and great principle in business which does not find its perfection in Jesus Christ, neither is there a good and great principle advocated by the working men which does not find its completion in His teachings and conduct.

A judge once said that he owed his great success on the bench to the fact that he stuck close to Moses' Law. Daniel Webster said he got his eloquence from the Bible, and Cassius M. Clay said he learned his beautiful diction from reading the parables of Jesus Christ. So men will never do business right till they study Jesus Christ, and take the plan of redemption and His teachings as a guide in all their affairs, and follow it as the mariner follows the lines marked out on the chart to direct his ship across the sea.

J. N. W.

CLEVELAND, O., May 25, 1896.



## CHAPTER I.

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### PARENTAL LOVE.

IT was a balmy evening in June that Mr. Smith sat on the veranda of his pleasant home and said to his wife : “My dear, what do you think of our going to Europe and spending a year with your parents and mine, walking over the old paths we trod a quarter of a century ago?”

“It is just what I have had in mind for a long time,” said Mrs. Smith. “It is true that Tommy is only ten and Mary seven ; but John is nearly twenty and has such an old head, we can trust him to take care of the children as wisely as if he were their father. Then Lucy is eighteen, has just graduated, and taking charge of the house for a year will be a good post-graduate course for her ; Charley is fifteen, and ought to begin to learn to take care of himself. I think it is just the thing to do, if you can leave your business.”

Mr. Smith replied : “The business is in good shape ; I have been planning for this, and have arranged things so John can manage them, with Charley helping him. We can let them have all the income to divide among them, then the more they make the more they will have ; it will be fine living, and

they will have a good time as well as we. Then the coal bank down at M——, which ought to be started, I will fix so the boys can operate, if they want to; and if they do they can live like princes, and each one of the children have a nice little bank account when we get back.”

Mr. Smith laughed heartily as he thought how happily he could fix his children.

“Your plan is splendid,” said Mrs. Smith. “It seems as if it were providential, the way things have fixed themselves, to let us go at this time, and we must not let this opportunity pass.

Mr. Smith felt his heart swell within him as he replied: “This is something I have anxiously looked forward to, when we could make the trip, and see both of our parents alive. You don’t know how thankful I feel.”

As Mr. Smith uttered these last words, he choked with emotion at the thought of the time when the aged four would receive their children to their arms and homes.

“Well,” said Mrs. Smith, “why not be off at once? Let us call in the children and see how it will take with them.”

“Go ahead,” said Mr. Smith.

The children were called into the parlor and the plans laid before them. Tommy lay on the floor, with his head turned up like a snake, and his little bare feet kicked up, while Mary sat near tickling them with a feather. John sat grave as a judge, with a business air and demeanor worthy a man of

twice his years. He grasped the entire plan, took in the whole situation, and advised his parents to go by all means, promising he would see to everything while they were gone. Lucy joined heartily with John, and so did Charley.

At the Smith home, everything from that on, for a fortnight, was hurry and bustle, getting ready for the trip. Every day Mrs. Smith talked with Mary and Tommy about being good little children while their parents were away, telling them they must obey John and Lucy, and not play with bad little children out on the street, and especially, they must not go down to play with the Brown children, saying to Tommy: "You know you always get into a fight every time you go down there." Both Tommy and Mary promised they would not go.

The day came to start, and when the carriage drove up to the house to take Mr. and Mrs. Smith to the train, they kissed their children good-bye, and while John, Lucy and Charley followed down to the carriage door, Tommy and Mary stood on the veranda, and the last look the fond parents got of their little darlings was Tommy and Mary dancing and throwing kisses after them, saying, "Dood-bye, mamma; dood-bye, papa; we'll be dood children while you're done."

As the carriage turned a corner which cut off the view, the strong man's head dropped, while tears sprang from his eyes at the thought that a year would pass before he would see his little cherubs again.



Mrs. Smith exclaimed, "Why, you are a bigger baby about those children than I am. You must not feel so, for they will be happy. John will take good care of them, and see that nothing goes wrong."

Mr. Smith looked out of the carriage and tried to get his thoughts on something else, while Mrs. Smith said: "Well, indeed, I don't blame you after all, for if I had not seen you crying, I myself should have cried, and you know I have always said that one baby at a time is enough."

By the time they had reached the station, Mr. Smith's tears were all brushed from his eyes, and the two were apparently as joyful as if they were a quarter of a century younger and on their wedding trip.

The business being left in John's hands, he received all drafts and drew all checks; for his father had made John's credit as good as his own. John saw there was a fine chance to make money, to make it easy and make it fast. Then, neither Lucy nor Charley knew anything about the coal bank; and if they did, they could not handle it, so he concluded to say nothing to them about it.

After John had looked carefully over the field, he saw he could pay Charley an extra good salary, and give Lucy an abundant allowance for the house, which would give both of them more money than they ever had before, he would still have more than half of the income of his father's estate left for himself. So he concluded there was no use

in letting the rest of the children know anything about how large this income was, nor about the coal bank at M——.

As John sat at the dinner-table that evening with Lucy and Charley, he said he had been thinking over their father's wishes in regard to his children, and they all knew it was his desire the children might have a good time while he was in Europe. So he told Lucy and Charley that he had concluded to make this sure to them, by giving them a fixed salary or allowance, which should be large, and he would take good care of Tommy and Mary, and get along himself somehow on what was left; so if any one was short, he would be the one. When John named the salary he would give Charley, Charley declared there was not another boy in the city getting as good a salary as that; and when he told Lucy the amount she was to have for the running expenses of the house, she said, "That is more than ever mother got from father." Both declared themselves in good fortune, feared John was robbing himself, and felt they were under great obligations to him for his magnanimity and generosity. They often talked together of what a good brother John was, and wondered if any other boy or girl in the city had so fine a brother.

John had life-sized portraits of his father and mother made and hung in the parlor. He purchased a new parlor carpet, took the large front-room upstairs for a library, and bought new books for Lucy and Charley to read. This, however, necessitated

the removal of the bed-room of Mary and Tommy to the attic, which Lucy thought would be just as good for children, and if they needed anything in the night, they would be near the hired girl, who would take care of them.

John also sodded the yard where the children had worn off the grass in their play. He then forbade Tommy and Mary going on the grass, or bringing other little children into the yard to play. He also gave strict orders that the house was not to be turned upside down with the children playing in it, or bringing in all the neighbors' children. There was plenty of room for them on the walks and in the kitchen. Lucy very cheerfully and strictly enforced all these orders for John.

While Lucy and Charley were well pleased with the new turn things had taken, and looked upon John as a benefactor and philanthropist, Mary and Tommy were not so well pleased, and the longer things went on, the greater became their discontent. But neither Lucy nor Charley had any sympathy with their complaining. Let them be good children and John would treat them all right, they said. And so they were set down as being across the path, in the onward march of civilization and the great material improvement which had come to the Smith family.

Said Lucy: "Children are always complaining, and there is no use in paying any attention to them. Let them go off and keep quiet."

Of course, the children went out on the streets

and into the alleys, or any place where they could find children to play with. Mary would get so dirty that her face could hardly be seen; and there was not a week passed that Tommy did not go down to the Brown children and get into trouble. John had a full sense of his authority, and was indignant at the way the children were acting. Both he and Lucy took very high grounds on the question of their parents' orders being enforced and obeyed. John's conscience had troubled him at times, because he was absorbing more than half the income of his father's estate; but as matters now seemed, he saw the great necessity there was for some one to conserve the interests of these younger children, and the argument seemed to justify all his robbery.

Often in the evenings, John, Lucy and Charley would gather their young friends into the library and have a little reading-circle, and John would give an occasional essay on "The Best Ways to Keep Children Off the Streets," and "The Necessity of an Older Brother's Conserving the Wealth of the Parents' Estate when the Father is Absent."

At dinner, Lucy often rehearsed to John the shortcomings of the children for the day. When the dinner was over, John would call the children in, remind them of their mother's last words and shame them, questioning them as to what their father and mother would think of such behavior, and sternly telling them, their mother could not love such naughty children, and if their father were there they would both get a good whipping. Then



Tommy and Mary were sent up to the attic to their little beds as a punishment. They would go and sob and cry themselves to sleep, thinking how their mamma and papa away across the big sea did not love them, and would resolve and resolve again that they would be good children and not go out on the streets to play, and never again go down to the bad Brown children.

So things went on with the natural variations for full a year. One day when John came home to lunch, Lucy took him up to see Mary, who was sick in bed. As soon as John saw her, he exclaimed: "Of all things! she has the scarlet fever." "Oh!" said Lucy, "what shall we do? We shall be quarantined as soon as the doctor comes; then you know we have two engagements for the theatre this week, and one night at Christian Endeavor, and Barnum's show is coming next week, and your birthday party will be a week from to-morrow, for which the invitations are already out. Oh, my! what shall we do?"

She had not finished speaking, when Tommy came in, howling at the top of his voice: "Those nasty Brown boys hit me on the nose." The blood was running freely, and the tears were making channels down through the dirt on his cheeks, while his clothes were full of dust and dirt.

The vision of John's boyhood days rose before him in a moment, and in all he never saw himself as such a naughty and disobedient child. With a clear conception of his own virtues, his soul, to

him, swelled with righteous indignation as he exclaimed: "I think it is time your father were getting home and taking you in charge. They have stayed away over their year already. You need a good, sound whipping for going down to those hair-brained scapegraces, and I will see to it that you get it when your father comes home. Go up to your bed-room and stay there until I tell you to come down. You have told me often enough you would not go down to Brown's, and still you have gone. You are a little liar."

John turned to Lucy and said: "Annie (the hired girl) is nearly as old as mother, and she was telling me only a few days ago that she had nursed a great many patients at the hospital who had the scarlet fever. We will give Mary into her hands and she will know what to do as well as the doctor. We will keep them up in the attic; I will get another girl for the kitchen, and we will let nobody know anything about it."

"But," said Lucy, "Tommy, the little rascal, never knows how to keep his mouth shut, and he has shown himself to be a little liar, and he will tell it to all the children in the streets."

"Oh!" replied John, "I will shut him up in the attic with Mary, to watch her when Annie is out, and he can give her drinks and fan her. I will see whether he is going to carry on in the way he has been any longer."

"John, you are a host to plan," said Lucy.

The night came for John's birthday party. All

their young friends were present. The hired girl had set the table, and asked Annie to come down to see if it were all right. The rich eatables and the bright light of the chandelier, shining down from above, made everything look inviting enough for a king.

In the meantime, Tommy had slipped down to take a survey of the situation. He kept a sharp lookout for Annie, so she did not see him. The scene was a tempting one to Tommy. He watched till he saw Annie and the girl withdraw to allow the guests to come in; then he slipped up to the table to get a part of the share which was fairly coming to him and Mary. He pulled off candy and sweet cake until his arms were full, then ran upstairs. But Tommy did not exercise the care of a caterer in the way he removed his part, and so left very visible tracks behind him.

He had barely made his escape, when John, with his best girl on his arm, entered the room, with all the guests following. When they surrounded the table, John and Lucy exchanged looks, said nothing, and both readily divined the cause of the condition of things.

The next morning, while they were at the breakfast table, Annie came in and said, in tender accents, "Mary is much worse, and Tommy is sick also. I am so sorry your father and mother have been delayed at sea."

John laid down his knife and fork, leaned back in his chair and, with an air of superior worth and

outraged virtue, said: "Just as I expected. Tommy has foundered on that cake he stole from me last night, and has given it to Mary, and that is what has made her worse. I tell you, he is beginning to be a thief pretty early. I shall not be surprised if he ends on the gallows yet. I think it is time his father were getting home."

Annie saw her uneven position and withdrew without saying anything farther.

Lucy remarked: "Tommy ought to be ashamed of himself," and to herself she wondered how it could be that so nice a young man as John was a brother to so bad a boy as Tommy; why he could not take pattern from his oldest brother.

Charley listened and took, second-hand, what John and Lucy said, as his opinion. He thought he was doing well and wanted to hold his position, and this was about the extent of Charley's concern.

The next day was the first of August, and in the afternoon the carriage drove up from the depot with Mr. and Mrs. Smith, home from their European trip, looking hearty and well.

Lucy ran to the carriage and pulled her mother out; her father alighted just long enough to kiss her and say: "Are the boys at the office?" Lucy replied that they were. "I will go for them," said Mr. Smith, "and be back in a few minutes." As he got into the carriage, he said to the driver, "Now let the horses step along," and away they went.

Mrs. Smith, with Lucy, went into the house; as



soon as in, she said, "Where are my babies?" Lucy told her how Mary and Tommy had been naughty children; how they had disobeyed her and played on the streets, and Tommy had gone down to the Brown children and John and she had done their best to make them keep away, but could not, and now Mary had the scarlet fever, was in her bed up in the attic, and they had shut Tommy up along with her to make him behave, but he came down and stole candy and sweet cake off the table at John's birthday party, and it had made them both sick; he was getting to be one of the worst boys—" Before Lucy had time to finish this sentence, Mrs. Smith was flying up the stairs to the attic.

As she opened the door of the room where they lay, the hot and sickening air struck her, and it went to her soul like a pall. She slipped to the bedside of Mary, and knelt down over her, saying, "Oh! mamma's sick little darling!" and began kissing her. The little faint voice said, "Mamma!" and the weak, thin arm tried to raise itself to hug her, but the strength failed it. Annie, kneeling beside Mrs. Smith, said softly: "She is very sick." The child gasped. That was her last; and Mary was dead in the arms of her mother.

The eyes of Mrs. Smith looked like glass. Not a tear was in them; and she condemned herself because she could not cry, asking herself if her heart had become a stone. She turned to Tommy, and there the little fellow lay, covered all over with

scarlet rash. "O mamma," he cried, "Tommy is glad to see you!" and, as she kissed him, she began to cry, and her bursting agony had some relief. Tommy went on, saying: "I have been a bad boy while you were gone, mamma. I went down and played with the Brown children. I didn't mind you, mamma, and John had to shut me up here in the garret with Mary, and I got sick. Will papa whip me, mamma, when he comes?" "Whip you, my child?" said Mrs. Smith. "No, no, no!" and the strength of a strong man came to her. She grasped him in her arms, took him up, carried him down-stairs, saying, "No, darling, no! You are papa and mamma's sweet little cherub; and they prayed so often for their little Tommy while they were gone. Mamma won't leave her little darling another minute in this hot room." \* "Though he was as scarlet," he "was white as snow" in his mother's eyes; "though he was red like crimson," he "was as wool," to her.

When down-stairs, she laid him on the couch in the sitting-room, kneeling down and bending over him, with her gaze intently fixed upon him.

During this time, Mr. Smith had gone to the office, saw that business was in good shape, and returned with the boys, entering the house a few minutes after Mrs. Smith had come down. John had called his father's attention to the fine sod in the yard, and as they came through the parlor, asked

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\* Isaiah i., 18.

him to look at the beautiful portraits he had put in the parlor.

But Mr. Smith's eye caught Tommy lying sick on the couch, and said to his wife, "How is this?" She whispered, while gently stroking her child's locks of hair, "He has the scarlet fever!" The strong man, weak as a child, stooped down beside his boy, while Tommy said, "Are you going to whip me, papa? John said you would. You don't love Tommy, do you, papa, because he went down to the Brown children?"

Mr. Smith, thinking the child was delirious, made no answer, and said: "Where is Mary?"

Mrs. Smith tried to speak, but could not. In a moment, from her suffocating grief, in broken syllables, came, "Go—to—the—attic!" The accents of her voice spoke volumes to her husband, and to the attic he quickly went, where he found faithful Annie sitting by the dead form of his child. He demanded what this all meant; and Annie told him all, as Lucy had told it to her, of John's operations. But, however she might tell it, Mr. Smith saw to the end of all that had happened and been done by John.

He took the dead body in his arms and carried it down-stairs, holding it tightly to his breast. As soon as he reached the foot of the stairs, he said: "John, I command you to tell me what you have been doing while we were away." John began telling his father what a bad boy Tommy had been, and how he and Mary would play out on the streets,

contrary to his and their mother's orders ; that they had gotten scarlet fever by it, and he was obliged to keep Tommy shut up in the attic, to keep him away from the Brown children, and so on. The father could listen no longer and broke in upon him, saying: "I left you here in my place with these your younger brothers and sisters. I entrusted you, my oldest and strongest child, with my property, and upon you I conferred the power of my name. This was done, not that you might take to yourself the greater part of the income of my estate, but that you, as my minor son, might enjoy your fair, equitable portion of it, and have the honor of standing at the head of the family and distributing to the rest of the children their portion. You have been unfaithful to your trust. You have brought death to our family and sorrow to our souls. I never can trust you again. You have sinned against your mother's being and against your father's love. These little ones are part of our flesh and parcel of our blood. How can we abide you as our son any longer? You must depart from our home and house."

And the mother spoke in trembling accents, yet in all the firmness of her soul: "Mary is dead and Tommy is dying, and it is all your fault. I will go down to the grave to my child mourning."

John went out from the presence of his parents with the \*curse of Cain upon him, forever to be a

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\* Genesis iv., 16.

stranger to his father's house, on account of his selfishness.

In like manner, Jesus represents the judge of the world at the great assizes, as saying "unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me."\*

As soon as the storm of indignation had quieted, Lucy began apologizing for John, saying he had been so kind to them, and that he had fixed up the house so nicely, and given her more money than she ever had before, and Charley had better wages than any other boy in town. John had tried to make Tommy and Mary be good children, and often said he would give them more money, but he was afraid they would buy too much candy with it and get sick; and then, Tommy might learn to smoke, if he had money to buy cigars; that John had fixed up the parlor better than it ever had been before, and

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\*Math. xxv., 41-45.



she thought Mr. and Mrs. Smith ought to take some notice of the fine portraits John had had made of them. Then, John bought fine books, and got Charley to read lots of evenings, instead of going down into the city after dinner. John had given to the church more than any young man in it, and often said if he became rich, he would like to give their church the finest pipe-organ in the city, and she believed if he obtained riches, he would make a philanthropist.

To this the father replied: "All this he did to be seen of men; to flatter his pride and swell his vanity."\*

Charley then said: "John was looked upon as the best business young man in the city," and that he thought John was all right; he had given him higher wages than any other boy was getting.

"Yes," said the father, "but he stole it all and as much more out of my estate, which belonged to you all equally. Then, he stole the entire earnings out of the coal bank down at M——, straight out."

But Lucy insisted if John started the coal bank at M—— and ran it, she could not see why it was not his. As for Charley and herself, they had never heard anything about it until now. She knew John had worked hard, and often went to the office at night and worked until midnight, and she guessed if any one else had the same chance

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\* Math. xxiii., 5.

and sense enough to do it, they would do the same thing.

But the father replied: "It was all mine and for my children alike, not his; Tommy and Mary have gotten almost nothing, and have been shut up in that hot garret, without proper attention, amidst the abundance I left for all: and with which none of you would have had need, had not John by his superior power of age, and the place I gave him, taken advantage of me, and robbed my children of what my love designed for them. Do you not see while he paid you good wages and a liberal allowance, he took your own to do it with, and then did not give you half that was coming to you by an equitable division, while he absorbed more than he gave to all of you. Do you not see if I had delayed my coming another year, he would have had you and Charley just where he has Mary and Tommy now. Can you not understand, that all this pretended kindness is merely to get his hold more firmly fastened upon my property and hold himself in position where he can rob poor little defenceless Mary and Tommy? And your turn in like manner would come as soon as he could gather strength and get the power over you."

Is it any wonder that Jesus, with all the strength of a father's love in condemnation, and with the sweet, disinterested, self-sacrificing, quiet love of a mother, when He came to the world, and found Mary dead, away up in some hot, filthy garret, and Tommy dying in some loathsome cellar, on ac-

count of the oppression and greediness of the strong, that He announced Himself not only as the friend of the poor, but the friend of sinners.\*

No wonder we read when He was up in the despised and adjudged unholy Samaria, in the hot air of Sychar's immorality, sitting on the curb of Jacob's well, that He talked to the woman who was a sinner; and when her heart warmed to His heavenly message, He told her first, that we have any record of, that He was the promised and long-looked-for Messiah. No wonder He sent her, the first missionary, up to Sychar, to tell her friends and neighbors of the advent of the Saviour, of the God-man being on earth. "Come, see a man," she said, "which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"†

Is it any wonder that He made the house of Mary, out of whom He cast seven devils, and her sister Martha, His abiding-place when in Bethany? Is it any wonder that He did not leave one hard or condemning word against the poor drunkard, or against her upon whom the foot of society has always rested so heavily? Their sins are sins of weakness, and the result of environments, rather than any choice on their part; and these conditions were made by people whom the world looked upon as respectable, and often as religious.

Mary and Tommy were naughty children and needed their parents' care and their parents' correc-

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\* Luke xxiv., 25. † John iv., 29.

tions. But John and Lucy were greater sinners than they, and by the law of "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her,"\* they had no right to punish Tommy and Mary. These last sinned as it is natural for children to sin. Theirs were sins which make the parents love their children none the less; they expect to find them in all children, and cheerfully will educate them out, and multiplying years will leave them all behind.

But John's sins were from selfishness, a disposition implanted by the devil. His sins were those which would not pass away with years, but would rather grow worse. His sins were committed not so much against himself as against others. His sins were not those of an over-excited appetite or wrongly indulged honest passion; neither were they the result of commanding environments.

A man once said to me: I think we ought to discriminate between religious, good rich men, who are respecters of God and God's house, and rich men who have no regard for sacred things and are openly bad or depraved. If we do, we will have to say: It was John's smooth, pious-going ways which caused Charley and Lucy to uphold him and apologize for his sinning. It was this character which made his parents trust him and gave him the opportunity to work his plans. His smooth outside was the deceit which opened the door for his

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\* John viii., 7.

devilishness inside to accomplish its work with the greatest success. Lucy and Charley accounted John righteous, even in the workings of his iniquity, and held Tommy and Mary as wicked. But the parents, when they saw what he had done, discovered and laid bare his awful crime and sin.

John himself thought he was righteous. For while a selfish heart covered over with a cunning, smooth demeanor deceives others, it deceives its possessor more than anyone else, as we shall show is true by Divine revelation.



## CHAPTER II.

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### THE SIN OF THE DEVIL.

**T**HE nature of the sin by which the devil fell, and for which he was cast out and forever banished from heaven, might at first appear as an impenetrable mystery. But it is very strange if that which so essentially affects the interests and lives of men cannot be determined.

Satan's manner of doing things with men gives us his character and nature; then, by applying things which are necessarily so, we can doubtless ascertain the correct facts in the case of his conduct and fall in heaven.

We know the law of heaven is love, and there is no doubt that angels in heaven are governed by brotherly love, and are equal one with another in point of privileges. There is no aristocracy in heaven, no poor class, no captains, no colonels nor generals amid all those holy children of God. Michael, it is true, is spoken of as an archangel, but Michael is evidently Jesus Christ. Wherever there is evidence in the Scriptures of rank or degree among the angels, it is spoken of as the fallen angels. Rank in rule, authority or power of one man over another is not in God's creation; and so far as any-

thing akin to it exists among the wild animals, in the stronger preying upon the weaker for food, grows out of the annoyance and disturbance of Satan in the world. God's law is seen among the kinder birds, the fish, the herbivorous animals and the flowers of the field, living in brotherly love one with another.

Paul speaks of the great final victory of Jesus Christ over sin in the world, being the complete overthrow of all dominion and lording it by some men over others. He says, "Then cometh the end, when Jesus shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet."\* Jesus Christ's errand to the world was to destroy the power of Satan and the sins which he had implanted in the hearts of men. These sins, as stated by the apostle, and which Jesus Christ will overthrow, are rule, authority and power. In darkest heathenism these go unchecked and unrestrained. The development and rise of liberty is the breaking down of rule, authority and power. Where these are not, and brotherly love controls the actions of men, freedom is in her full tide and civilization is in its perfection. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."† When Jesus Christ shall pronounce men free, it will be the total abolition of all forms of rule, authority

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\* 1 Cor. xv., 24, 25. † John viii., 36.

and government of one man over another; and every man shall be a law unto himself. Then, and not till then, shall He deliver up the kingdom unto God, even the Father. And when it is so done, men on earth will be like the angels in heaven, as drops of water, or atoms of air mingling together one with another, governed under God, by the great law of brotherly love, as gravitation holds in place and governs matter. Jesus Christ's kingdom, on the one hand, is love, equality and freedom; Satan's kingdom, on the other hand, is rule, authority and power.

Jesus speaks of Satan as "the prince of this world,"\* and Paul calls him the "God of this world."† Satan lorded it over the world then, and has done so entirely too much since, to our sorrow and to our shame. This he has done entirely through motives of selfishness and greed for rule, authority and power; and every particle of it he wrested from the hands of God and men in violation of the high law of brotherly love.

It is said when Michael cast out from heaven "that old serpent called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."‡

The Saviour speaks of Satan as "Beelzebub, which is the prince of devils."§ From these passages, it is certain that Satan is, and always was, at the head of all the devils, and that he led the

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\* John xii., 31. † 2 Cor. iv., 4. ‡ Rev. xii., 9. § Math. xii., 27.

great revolt in heaven when he fell. The very idea of Satan, the old devil, is that of a leader, the chief in hell; while he is revealed in the Scriptures as the prince of this world, with assumed rule, authority and power taken from God and gained over men through deceit. As he is doing on earth, he doubtless tried to do in heaven, and for this sin he was, in all probability, cast out.

The sin of the devil is not drunkenness, nor immorality, nor larceny, nor anything of these like. That Satan inspires these sins and tempts men to do them is true; but they are secondary forms of selfishness, being mixed with lawful passions, appetites and desires. While they degrade men in the sight of their fellows, and society and law have put the stamp of sin and crime upon them, they do not so irretrievably damn a man's nature as selfishness, even though it be dressed up in the cleanest character.

These sins weaken men's bodies and minds, and through them men lose their self-respect, dignity and courage. This unfits them for defending themselves against their oppressors. The deeper men are sunken in vice, the easier and stronger Satan can bind his chains about them. Then, these crimes take up the attention of society in their reformatory movements, while Satan is left comparatively unobserved to make conquests in more gigantic forms of sin. Here is one of Satan's master moves, namely, to keep the attention of good people focused on the sins of the drunkard and the

woman who is a sinner; while he and his strongest agents and men most like himself have an open field to work out their selfish plans, and even while so doing, wear the garb of saints and honorable men. Selfishness is sin in its pure satanic meanness and accursedness. Between selfishness and devilishness there is no difference. As a man becomes selfish, he approaches the nature of a devil. To the extent with which a man's acts are prompted by selfishness, they are like the devil's doings. A thoroughly selfish man is a devil incarnate, no matter what virtues else he may claim to have. One of my old professors once said to our class: "You must not expect too much from conversion. If you get a selfish, stingy man converted, you do not take the selfishness out of him. He will stay selfish and stingy still." The doctor applied his experience among men correctly, but his theology was not true to the Scriptures, and was clouded with the commandments of men taught for doctrine. He had better said, When you get a selfish man converted, you do not have him converted at all; you have only gotten him to join the church, and you had better have let him stay out, both for his own soul and the influence on good morals.

The devil is not a drunkard, he is not immoral, he would not hesitate to join the church, if he could gain a point by it, and could make himself look enough like a man that his exotic nature would not be detected. The devil could pray and be very sanctimonious, he could be a temperance reformer,

or president of a law and order society, or endow an asylum, or a college, or build a church. But one thing the devil cannot do—he cannot love. His nature is the exact opposite—selfishness. “Now abideth faith, hope, charity,” or brotherly love, “these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” Jesus Christ is love. Paul might, with equal truth and philosophy, have written: Now abideth pride, unbelief and selfishness, these three; but the most damnable of the trio is selfishness. The devil is selfishness personified.

There is human nature in men and angel nature in devils, and the two are not so unlike as we often suppose. Both natures were created by God, and both were created holy and happy; both kept not their first estate in which they were created; both sinned and fell, and the earth is cursed by the sinning of both acting in concert, or rather, man acting at the suggestion and under the leadership of the devil and his angels.

Wealth and power, the reward and fruits of selfishness in a strong man, beget, as a sure consequence, vanity and pride. So Paul, in writing to Timothy, speaks of pride as being the sin into which the devil fell.

And now we inquire, What are Satan’s motives in disarranging the world and tempting men to sin and finally lose their souls? It does him no good. It makes hell no more comfortable or bearable. As far as we can learn, hell is too full now. Nevertheless, Satan goes on with an industrious



determination of purpose that has nothing surpassing it known to men. What makes him so intent on tempting men to sin? The only explanation to be found is comparing it with perplexities of the same kind or nature, and making a classification which we call an explanation.

There is a parallel case, which I hesitate to use, fearing my gentle reader may think I am indulging in coarseness. But I beg you to consider that I am not accountable for facts in the world. I must be true to things as they are, and as I find them. When I was a boy, I used to watch a great hog, which had grown so fat his legs would not hold him, and he stood on his belly to eat corn and drink swill. When the corn was eaten up and the swill drank, he would squeal for more. I thought the thing most needed for his comfort was a few good doses of anti-fat and vigorous fasting. What did he want with more fat? He had so much he was uncomfortable, and every pound he gained made him more miserable. But he had an appetite which was never satisfied, and the only relief it found was in eating. But there was no sense in his conduct.

Then we find the same disposition in the man who has all the money he has any need of to provide amply for his family and protect them in case of disease, old age and all ordinary mishaps, grabbing and grasping for more. When a man has all he can make use of, the more he gets gives him no more comfort or enjoyment in life, but adds more

care and burden, increases the gnawing appetite for the greed and gain of wealth, and life is made more uncomfortable. Men go on amassing wealth with as little reason for it, as the devils tempt men to sin, and adding a burden to life which is as useless and senseless as the great hog's fat. The hog eating and squealing for more after he had too much fat already, the devils tempting men to sin, and the man striving for more money than is meat, are all inspired by one and the same nature, and we can only explain the reason for any one of the three doing as he does, by classing him with the other two.

When the Lord cast the devils out of the poor possessed Gadarene, they besought Him, that they might go into the herd of swine feeding near by. I think this was for the reason that the devils could find no other animal so near like themselves as hogs. But when they went into the swine, the hogs being so well charged with selfishness already by their own natures, the entering of a devil into them made a double portion of selfishness and brought the logical conclusion to its possessors immediately, viz., self-destruction—"and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about two thousand), and were choked in the sea." Selfishness is suicidal, and while it damns its possessor, it makes him a curse to all with whom he comes in contact.

Here we see the truth of that most beautiful parable, "The Prodigal Son." It was very wicked for

the younger son to spend on harlots all that portion of his father's goods coming to him, and good society is shocked at his conduct. Yet in doing so he sinned after the manner of men, and it was in the exercise of the highest and holiest passion of man, only he indulged it in an unlawful way. The passion which moved him to sin was placed in him by God Himself, and man would not be a man without it

But the older brother sinned in the exercise of selfishness, and its fruits—stinginess and jealousy—stand out in the narrative. The elder brother's sin and John's was the exercise of a nature God never put in man, and reveals a disposition in them which is satanic and in direct antagonism with God's highest law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord."\* God is our father. These sinned not like men; they sinned like devils.

Jesus Christ came to the world to purify polluted men, to heal sin-sick, depraved human nature, and to forgive the sins of men; but Jesus did not come to the world to reform and forgive devils; not so much that He had not the desire of doing good to all, as the impossibility which lay in the way of ever helping selfish, self-willed, proud devils. They are too proud and self-willed to repent, and too selfish to be touched with the power of love—brotherly—the supreme and commanding character of Jesus.

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\* Lev. xix., 18.

## CHAPTER III.

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### THE SIN IN EDEN.

**W**HEN God had finished the creation of the world, the animals, fish, birds, trees and plants, it is written : “ And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.”\* It is said in the verse before this, “ I have given every green herb for meat, and it was so.”† God never made a thorn or thistle, nor did He make an animal or plant or tree or fish that was not for the meat, or in other words, for the use of man.

But, when Satan came into the world, he started up all the evil that is in it, which the Scriptures call vanity. Thence came up the thorns, thistles and briars ; and for this reason the animals became ravenous, rapacious and bloodthirsty. This was not done by the will of nature, but by reason of him who subjected it. The world is burdened with the sins of Satan, and he probably annoyed and interrupted God’s plans long before the creation of man. At least, it was from the time that Michael cast him down upon the earth at his fall.

Paul, writing to the Romans, says : “ For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the

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\* Gen. i., 31. † Gen. i., 30.

revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”\*

All nature is groaning and travailing in pain under the curse of Satan’s thralldom. The world inanimate as well as animate is waiting and earnestly expecting the time when man shall cease his selfish sinning and be ruled by brotherly love.

In the creation of man, God had in His plans the redemption of the world from the power of Satan’s bondage. For the use of man, “the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”† In all this garden there was not a

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\* Rom viii., 19-22.—R. V. † Gen. ii., 8, 9, 15, 16, 17.

thorn, thistle, briar or an animal that had a breath of Satan's selfish nature in his body or was untamed. The earth was Satan's territory by usurpation, and so he was the prince of the world. Had man not fallen, and had he held the garden of Eden for God, the devil's territory would have been invaded; and the work of the recaption of the world would have been successfully begun. As years came to men, they would have been more and more confirmed in holiness. As years came and went, the race would have increased, and for the enlarged number of men the garden would have been extended with the increasing needs until it had covered the whole earth. The prince of darkness would have been driven back off the earth and the creation delivered from the bondage of his curse.

When man was created, he was placed on the same footing with the angels of heaven. They were holy and happy, and had all the good things of heaven they could make any use of, or in any way needed for their fullest enjoyment. "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."\* "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a

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\* Gen. i., 26.



tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat."\*

For every want there was an abundant supply provided, and God told them, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."† Here is the principle this early laid down, that there is a limit to a man taking of the good things of the earth, no matter how he may do it; not even by the simple and innocent movement of the hand in reaching up and taking it. And God announced to them that from the high throne of righteousness the penalty for so doing was death. Adam and Eve saw the animals outside of the garden killing and devouring each other. They saw their quarreling, they heard their agonizing groans in pain and death. Death being the most impressive and striking feature, they called it all death; and this is without doubt the impression made upon their minds.

The tree of knowledge of good and evil was no arbitrary enactment of God; but there was in it the great fundamental principle underlying the whole relation of men socially and in the business world. It is the principle, if obeyed, that has more

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\* Gen. i., 29, 30. † Gen. ii., 16, 17.

than alchemic powers to brighten the world. It is the principle that, if disobeyed, is selfishness, which lost us Eden, and from which came sin and death and all else ill to men. It is the principle that when a man has enough, he ought to be satisfied, and unless selfish, he will be satisfied. Between the taking of the forbidden fruit and eating it, and the not taking of it and not eating it, lies the border line between sin and holiness. Over that line is the lust of ambition and pride, which has been the author of all forms of despotism, oppression and slavery, the selfishness of wealth and the greediness of monopolies. If man will not be satisfied with that which is convenient for him, but must be ever reaching out for more than is meat, he is unfit for the kingdom of heaven on earth, like Satan was unfit for the kingdom of heaven above. Had Adam and Eve left the forbidden fruit alone, and added to this, had they done it over the solicitations of Satan, they would have shown themselves fit for self-government, that they were not greedy, that they would love their neighbor as themselves, and so were fit for the kingdom of brotherly love on earth and fit for the kingdom of heaven above, from which Satan had been cast out. But in their taking of the forbidden fruit, they revealed their selfish, greedy natures, grasping for more than was meat and more than they needed. They in that act chose the disposition of the devil in preference to the sweet spirit of God. The fond ties of the family relation were soon severed, and, instead of

brotherly love, the first man born into the world killed his younger brother from pure selfish motives.

When man sinned, God's rampart on earth for the establishment of brotherly love was lost and taken by Satan and selfishness. Man had chosen the devil as his counselor and leader, instead of obeying God's commands.

The only power God ever permits to hold Him back is the refusal of free agents to co-operate with Him in His works of righteousness and love. "I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught my counsel, and would none of my reproof,"\* is God's own complaint against man. By special intervention, God had freed the ground inside the garden of Eden from the curse of Satan, to fit it for the habitation of sinless man; but when man sinned and by his own choice took upon him the curse of Satan, there was no further need of the garden being kept, so God withdrew His hand, and it became cursed again. The rest of the earth, which would have been freed from the curse had not man sinned, must now from man's sin remain under the curse until Shiloh come. So God said to Adam: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."†

The argument by which Satan persuaded Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit, was that she should be—

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\* Prov. i., 24, 25. † Gen. iii., 17, 18.

come as one of the gods. What relation there could be between the eating of the forbidden fruit and an increase in knowledge and wisdom, might seem hard to see indeed. But do we not find here the same principle that there is in the large acquisition of property and possession of money? What connection is there between a man having a deed to a million, or no matter how many millions, and exceptionally great wisdom and knowledge? Yet the rich accord to themselves superior talents, superiority of class, superior blood, over the poor, and look upon themselves almost as another species of beings. What is stranger still, it takes an effort on the part of many of the poor and common people not to concede them this fact and agree with them. For, some way or other, the world is always prone to look up to the rich man, as if he were a little god in wisdom and everything else. Men will work and worry the very lives out of themselves merely to pile up fortunes, and they pile up these fortunes for no other reason than to make themselves as gods—to have power, to be great in their chosen line, unless they follow the low instincts of hogs.

The deification of self, the pampering of self in riches, always means lawlessness. The ambition of the rich is to command, to own and control property, which carries with it the government of men. Theirs is to govern, and not to be governed; to dictate, and not to be dictated to. The natures of the common people are more pliable; they are

more considerate for the rights of others, and the helplessness and defencelessness of the poor make them not so formidable a foe to the public welfare. But the rich override law from their natures of selfishness; and their imagined deification of themselves makes them think it is their unquestionable right, and their position gives them power to transgress and then escape the chastisements of the strong arm of the law, which their conduct deserves.

The temperance and social reformer has ever found his unconquerable foe to be in the transgressions of the rich; and from their high position the baleful influence goes percolating down through every strata of society. As the power of wealth increases, the influence of the common people wanes, whom Jesus told us are "the light of the world."\* A tenfold greater necessity than all else is for a reformation directed squarely against every form of selfishness, and especially selfishness in high places. This will be laying the axe at the root of the tree, as John the Baptist tells us is Jesus' design. Then, and not till then, will it come to pass, "every plant which my heavenly father hath not planted shall be rooted up."† Wealth in the hands of the few, together with its necessary resultant oppression of the masses, is indissolubly linked together with ignorance, vice, crime and debauchery. While, on the other hand, if there is

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\* Math. v., 14. † Math. xv., 13.

before the masses an opportunity of increasing comforts and prosperity, it is certain to lead to greater intelligence and a higher standard of morality.

In the creation, God distinctly stated that He gave to man the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air and everything that moveth upon the earth, and the fruit of every tree and every green herb as the meat for man. Over these He gave man dominion like He held Himself, as if He relinquished His dominion to man; so in the image of God created He him. Man—the people—has the divine right to all that is in the world and to rule over it for his benefit and comfort. But no class of men has a superior right over others, and they who take or hold such power have it only from a title given to them by Satan, and in doing it they are imitating the devil and in league with him.

Man's highest interests are to break the reigning power of Satan in the world. That man is foolish, an enemy to himself, to his kind, and even to the brute creation, who is not ready to make any sacrifice and use every available means to make advancement towards this end. It was a great mistake and sin for Adam and Eve to put themselves and the human race under the power of Satan, leaving the world at his control; but they did not foresee the awful end. Now, if their transgression in their blindness was a sin, which brought upon them such bitter woe, "of what sorer punishment, suppose ye, he shall be thought worthy,"\* who, with all

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\* Heb. x., 29.



the history of six thousand years of pain, suffering and woe laid open before him as the result of following Satan rather than God, shall go on greedily binding the world in Satan's chains of selfishness, entailing upon it misery, vice, debauchery, crime, nakedness, hunger and death? Seeing he "hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace."

When Jesus Christ shall have slain selfishness in the hearts of men, the Goliath of sin will have fallen, and all other forms of wickedness will beat a hasty retreat, as the Philistine army did when their giant was slain by the son of Jesse, David, the ruddy shepherd boy. Then will the power of Satan be broken upon earth; and the good things of nature which he now hides from our eyes will flow out in such abundance that peace and plenty will abound for all men. Then will the prophecy of Isaiah be fulfilled, that "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."\*

The rule, extent and dominion of property among men is "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground."† Man is to hold as his domain that which he gains by honest service and keeps by prudence and economy. Gathering this world's goods by this means stimulates a man in mind and body and tends to purify

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\*Is. lxxv., 25. † Gen. iii., 19.

his soul; it is of such a man the Scriptures say, "The hand of the diligent maketh rich."\*

But, when a man begins to gather in more than is a fair return for his services, to seize and hold advantageous positions, monopolizing the good things of the world, and is in the race for wealth, he is reaching forth his hand and taking of the forbidden fruit. When a man makes up his mind that he will be rich, the day he does, love—brotherly love—dies within him. "Woe unto you that are rich."† "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."‡

Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit that they might become like gods, but in eating it they became like devils. They thought it was good, but God knew it was evil. Men labor and strive for wealth to become as gods; but, in so doing, they imitate the devil; and, as their riches increase, they become more and more like him, till they reflect his image in all their stingy, selfish ways of life. They drift farther and farther away from God, from all that is high and noble in humanity and true manhood, until, blinded in vanity and bound in selfishness, they become a curse to all within their influ-

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\* Prov x., 4. † Luke vi., 24. ‡ 1 Tim. vi., 9, 10.

ence, as Satan always has been and is to the world at large.

Of all the sins men commit against us, there is none so great, so far as this world goes, as that which takes away our opportunities for making the most out of life. Whenever a man takes more to himself than is needed for meat, he is taking somebody's opportunity, and somebody suffers from his transgression of greed—he is eating the forbidden fruit. It was ordained in the beginning, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat."\* God means every man to have a full, abundant living, and to enjoy the good things of the earth. In order that it might be so, He placed upon the sin of greed a check in announcing the prohibition, "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it."† He also warned them of the curse that would inevitably follow upon their transgression, saying, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."—*Idem*.

Self-government and civil liberty is every man having his equitable portion of dominion over property and the work of his hands, as well as equal rights of suffrage in the management of the commonwealth. The small tradesman, the farmer, the man owning and working his shop, are men living with the opportunities of developing the image which God has placed upon man.

The man who steals our money, leaves us the opportunity to gather up again and regain that

\* Gen. ii., 16. † Gen. ii., 17.

which we lost, but he who robs us of our opportunity of making the most out of life, strands us on shoals amid barren rocks. The former steals the fruit which we have picked from the trees in the orchard of the Lord; but the latter assumes possession of the orchard and will not let us pick the fruit, except by his permission and that he receive a large part of the fruits we gather.

“So God drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life,”\* lest man “take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.”† The fear of death holds kings in check, and in all events sooner or later makes them lay down the scepter of their power. In the short time of a quarter of a century of business, the plutocrat runs up to fabulous wealth. Then, with this advantage gained over the lines of trade and other men, if there be added a hundred years or more, what would be the limit of his power? But to have let men live on and on the thousands of years since the creation of man, the devil’s few agents would hold the world groaning under their iron yoke with a power that could not be broken. But with death as it is now, just as the plutocrat’s sails are fully spread, and everything appears to be going finely before a spanking breeze, while he is preparing to pull down his barns and build greater, he hears the words: “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required

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\* Gen. iii., 24. † Gen. iii., 22.

of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"\* He dies, the world breathes easier, and men are more comfortable because he is out of it. So God drove them out of the garden of Eden, and placed a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree, lest man take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.

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\* Luke xii., 20.

## CHAPTER IV.

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### THE TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS.

**A**S SOON as Eden was lost, God informed Satan, saying: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Although Satan had gained a point and a victory over heaven, God gave him to understand it was only temporary and in the end he would be utterly overthrown. Man had turned his back upon God and joined the forces of Jehovah's arch-enemy; but not for one moment did God forsake man or abandon His purpose of finally redeeming and saving him from the power of Satan's curse, under which he had put himself. All the way down through the ages of the patriarchs, the kings and the prophets, this was the purpose of God's dealings with men, till at last in the fulness of time, Shiloh came.

Jesus came to the earth to regain that which was lost in Eden—to do all that would have been done in reclaiming the world had not man fallen and sinned. From the time Jesus was born into the world in Bethlehem, and the Judean "shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their



flock by night, heard a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men,"\* Satan knew the last great contest had begun. He watched every movement of the child Jesus. He watched Him as a young man in His daily rounds of life, as He worked with the axe and the adze, the awl and the line. But when Satan saw Him baptized of John, and heard John so modestly and humbly yielding preference to Jesus, and saw Him as He went up straightway out of the water; and lo! the heavens were opened to Him, and the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him, "and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,"† he could restrain his wrath no longer. Therefore, seizing Jesus, he led Him into the wilderness, or, as Mark puts it: "Immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness, and he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts."‡ During these forty days, Satan compelled Him to fast, and starved Him, while he tormented every muscle and nerve in His body as worst he could. Jesus suffered it to be so, for it was needful that His flesh should feel every pain and temptation that sorrowing human nature can ever know. He was tempted and tried in all points as we are. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to

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\* Luke ii., 8, 13, 14. † Math. iii., 16, 17. ‡ Mark i., 12, 13.

succor them that are tempted.”\* “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”†

Luke tells us: “In those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.”‡ With all this fasting and worry, how weak, weary and hungry Jesus must have been. Satan, taking this as his opportunity, gathered up all his strength and plied Jesus with three successive temptations, which had a delicacy of insight and an originality of conception that far transcends the range of the invention of the most powerful mind of man. Satan had found that force and coercion would not avail with Jesus. He now poses in the appearance of one of earth’s most honorable, influential and greatest men—certainly not in any hideous form. With all the influence and impressiveness of wealth, intelligence and refinement that it is possible to bring to bear upon a man, Satan said to Jesus, “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But Jesus answered and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”§ These stones were, perhaps, those siliceous accretions which assume the exact shape of little loaves of bread, and the pains of hunger were stimulated by the added torture of a quick imagination.

The temptation was an appeal to the appetite,

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\* Heb. ii., 18. † Heb. iv., 15. ‡ Luke iv., 2. § Math. iv., 3, 4.

and affected directly that part of a man which is animal. But Jesus resisted the demands of His own body, the craving of hunger, showing His perfect unselfishness in that He would not work a miracle to relieve His own sufferings; while we find Him always ready to relieve the sufferings of others and without hesitation would work a miracle to do it. Herein lies a great lesson for men, and a lesson enforced by the greatest example. Man should not be guided by his lower nature. There are higher principles of life than material sustenance. Man, it is true, is an animal; but man is more than an animal. Man is in the image of God. His highest being is his godlike nature; and he is moving in his highest sphere when the animal is acting in obedience to the divine life within him.

Jesus also, in this answer, dealt Satan a terrific blow for his selfishness, and Satan understood it so. He knew where the quotation was taken from. It came from the place where God had fed the poor Israelitish emancipated slaves with manna from heaven. Satan held the idea, if a working man had enough bread to eat to keep him strong and coarse clothes to keep him warm, he had no right to complain, if the rich did take all the rest. But Jesus told him that man should not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Satan knew that this meant man; not a few men, but man should have a right to everything which God had created by the word of His mouth, and that by the power of the word of

God all things were created which do exist. Satan's selfishness received a severe rebuke, both in Jesus' conduct and words, so he changed the method of his attack.

The next time Satan tempted Jesus was when they were standing on the pinnacle of the temple. Probably this was the roof of the royal porch, on the southern side of the temple, which looked down sheer into the valley of the Kedron below it, from a height so dizzy that, according to Josephus, if anyone ventured to look down, his head would swim at the great depth. "And Satan said unto Jesus, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."\* The temptation here is spiritual pride, the dignity of life. It is in the desire to be considered personally and officially as good as we really are and deserve. It is not to have our good deeds evil spoken of, nor to be deemed impostors. This second temptation strikes a higher order of our nature than the former one. It was also strengthened by a passage of Scripture, which Satan most ingeniously wove into his powerful argument to make Jesus feel, if He did not cast Himself down from the pinnacle, He would appear to doubt the Scriptures, and give good grounds for men to think He was not the Son of God. The color of the presentation of the tempta-

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\*Math. iv., 6.

tion was, that Satan was trying to help Jesus, by causing Him to do an act which would demonstrate to the world that He was indeed the Son of God. And have not thousands of even good-meaning people gone into this temptation? Does not the history of the world show that thousands of men who would not sink into the slough of sensuality, have substituted pride of profession, obedience to the commandments of men taught for doctrine, enforced sanctimonious airs, strained conscience and voluntary sufferings for unselfishness and love to men in their actions, and so cast themselves down into ruin from the pinnacle of spiritual pride?

But Jesus withstood it all, and "said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."\* The place from which Jesus took this passage and its relations there made it another blow dealt to Satan in the same place He had struck him before. The passage He quoted from is in Deuteronomy, where the Lord was warning the Israelites while in the wilderness not to forget their hateward to the plutocratic oppression of the Pharaohs, and their liberation by the hand of Jehovah, when they came into the land of plenty in Canaan; lest they turn to be selfish and become oppressors themselves as the Pharaohs were, and so go after the gods of the heathen. The gods of idolatry were all gods of force, power or wealth, and their resultants, lust, pride, cruelty and the like. Jehovah was the only God of brotherly love. And

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\*Math. iv., 7.

it was now becoming apparent to Satan's mind that in Jesus was a clearer revelation of pure, unselfish love than the world had ever seen. By the authority of the law and the prophets, God's anger, or fury, or jealousy, or indignation, was never kindled except as against these gods of idolatry, whom Jesus put into one great class and called them mammon.

Foiled a second time, Satan gathered up all his powers and staked everything on one splendid cast, into which he threw his entire strength and being. These temptations gathered in power and influence as one followed after another, showing that Satan holds heavy reserve forces while he contends with men. But here he called into exercise every power. It was his Waterloo, which would decide his fate in his relation to men. So he unsheathed the longest sword of selfishness, or mammon, and wielded it to its entire length. It is written: "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."\* The meaning of the word here translated worship does not mean, in the original Greek, religious homage or adoration, but is the primary meaning of our word worship as given in Webster's dictionary—"to respect, to honor, to treat with civil reverence." It was customary in those days to fall down in the presence of one's

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\* Math. iv., 8, 9.



superiors. So what Satan asked of Jesus was that He would act in compliance with Satan's selfish ways, and give up His principle of love, which proclaims the unity and the absolute brotherhood of the whole human family. The Roman emperor, Tiberius, was at that hour the most powerful of men living. He was, in fact, the absolute, undisputed, deified ruler and, in a word, the possessor of all that was the fairest and richest in the kingdoms of the earth. He was not only a political ruler, but so far as right and advantage could be had from property, he was the owner of the world. The Roman empire had been built up by wicked wars, carried on for the gratification of the selfish ambition of men, and the result of all this concentration of capital and power was held by Tiberius, an old man of seventy-one years, one of the most selfish and, at the same time, the most miserable of men that history gives any account of. All this centralization of wealth and power had been at Satan's suggestion and in execution of his plans, and while the Roman empire was to him his glory, it was, in fact, a monument to his shame. Only the few were well supplied. The wisest scholars held that the common people had no souls and were little better than brutes and dogs. While the philosophers dreamed sublimely of the great beyond, their philosophy did nothing for the masses, but left them wallowing in ignorance, vice, debauchery, squalor and cruel poverty. Satan held the world in his grasp. For four hundred years the prophets

had been silent, and never was there a time when Satan's claim was less disputed as the prince of this world.

It has been said: Why did Satan not know better than to tempt the Son of God, the Almighty God, even if he was in flesh? He might have known he would fail, and could not make Him sin and fall. But it must be remembered that there is nothing which so inflates a devil and puffs him up, as with men, like power gained and held by strength of wealth and great possessions. When wealth gathers around men, they set at naught the counsels of God, and God permitting them to be free agents, they can run a long way in defiance of His almighty power. There is nothing which so inflames egotism and vanity as the possession of wealth. But never was there a man who had such mighty holdings and the hardening of so many years as Satan now had, neither were there any ever more inflated with their success than he. His proud feelings told him there was nothing he could not do and accomplish.

Then Satan, like men, had an overweening conceit of the power of money. He held, as men do, the motto, "Money will do anything, if you put up enough of it." He thought that while some were hard to buy, yet every man had his price, and could be bought if the offer were large enough. He knew the task before him was the hardest he ever had and was the greatest he ever would encounter. So he thought he would put the figure high enough to

reach anything in human flesh. He flung the world at Jesus' feet. While the world was at that time in Tiberius' hands—and perhaps a more faithful servant to Satan a master never had—yet the interests of Tiberius would never stand a moment in the way of Satan's success in business. He could quickly infuse a disease into his body and end his life; and he would have done it without hesitation had the offer been accepted. What did Satan care for cutting off the head of a servant who had given him his largest greatness, if higher attainments could thereby be gained. Gratitude had long since died in his dark soul, from selfishness. When the rich man's interests come in conflict with the interests of his employes, the wealthy man having the power makes it customary that his own interests must be taken care of, even if it sends the employes and their families into the streets begging. So Satan said: "All these things will I give thee;"\* and he had the power to deliver the property, and doubtless intended to give Jesus the visible kingdoms of the world, if he could only remain as the prince of the power of the air.

Here is the temptation into which the mighty and giant-brained men of all ages have fallen. It is the temptation of the great, the renowned and the wealthy. Had Jesus yielded, Satan would still have allowed Him to fill the *role* of the Son of God, the promised Messiah. In doing so, Jesus would have redeemed Israel from the Roman yoke

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\* Math. iv., 9.

and put the world under the rule of Judah. He would have set up the kingdom as Israel had long waited and watched for. It would have met the expectations, not only of the scribes and the Pharisees, but of the common people, His twelve whom He chose for His disciples, together with the mother of James and John. The temple would have rung with loud huzzas and hosannas for Him, and it is a question if there would then have been a dissenting voice in all Israel against Him.

But Jesus "saith unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."\* This answer is taken from the same chapter from which the one before was taken, and only a verse or two preceding it, which makes it the third blow that stuck Satan in the same place, viz., his selfishness and his plutocratic doings. Each wound Satan received was deadly driven into the heart of his nature and very being, and the devil "departed from him for a season."†

While Satan was in the height of his glory and ambition, his downfall came. Jesus met him, baffled him, and drove him back, with all his temptations, at the gate of every emotion. Never were temptations so cunningly laid, charged with such power, or urged with such intensity of determination, or handled with so deep sagacity and shrewdness, but they did not enter the noble mind of Jesus or influence His unselfish soul. Jesus fought the

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\* Math. iv., 10. † Luke iv., 13.

battle clad in the armor of human nature and free will, which has been hacked and riven of men by many cruel blows in all ages. But out of the dark temptations of the wilderness, as well as from those revealed, He rose victorious and pure, for every temptation floated as trackless over His sinless soul as the cloud wreath of a summer day floats over the blue heavens, whose fair brow it cannot stain.

Jesus gave the lie to the maxim that "Every man has his price;" and mammon learned that day there was one man on the earth the world could not buy. Since that time, many have followed Jesus' example, and in His name have resisted the temptations of selfishness and declined the power of wealth. His spirit will be the spirit of men when His kingdom is set up on the earth, selfishness will play no part in the conduct of men; brotherly love will reign supreme, and the law will be: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets"\* and Jesus Christ. These temptations are no occult, hidden emotions of the human soul, but they are those things which fill the tide of human affections and the experiences of men

From that hour, Satan was wild with desperation and rage. The devils came out from behind the veil between mortals and the spirit world, walked and talked with people, entered into and possessed the sons of men, and even brutes. On all hands,

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\* Math. vii., 12.

wherever Jesus went, they were tormenting men in most cruel ways, and often so desperate and foolish as to defeat their own ends and purposes.

The sin for which Satan was cast out of heaven, the sin by which our first parents fell and lost their first estate, and the character of the temptations with which the devil tried Jesus, increasing and enlarging to the last, where it stood out in awful significance, are all one and the same, viz., the selfishness, and pride, and vanity of wealth, the parent of all oppression or cruelty, and the by far greater part of crime.

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Men become like the gods that they worship and those whom they respect and honor. God is love. No constant, abiding, well-poised brotherly love can be expected which does not derive its power from God. In this reply of Jesus was the unconditional affirmation of the reign of brotherly love among men, and in His conduct was the absolute negation of all forms of selfishness and the abrogation of Satan's power on earth. In this brave stand of Jesus against the strongest of temptations, in which He withstood the sword of selfishness wielded in its entire length, He turned the tide of battle in the world; sin was there repulsed, and mammon began his retreat, and the conquest of brotherly love was begun. Here that which was lost in Eden began to be regained, and the beginning of the end was begun. "To this end was I born," said Jesus, "and for this



cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."\* From that time the poor began to have the gospel preached to them.

The ministry of Jesus stood between two great mountain ranges of temptations or severe trials. The forty days in the wilderness and these temptations stood at the gateway, while the passion week, including His last public address in the temple, Gethsemane and the crucifixion, stood at the exit.

We have now entered the gateway, and we will travel with Him over the great plain of truth which lies between, and pass the mountains on the other side.

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\* John xviii., 37.

## CHAPTER V.

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### PALESTINE AND THE UNITED STATES.

**G**OD seemed to fit up Palestine for the children of Israel as a second garden of Eden. The grape clusters grew so large at Eshcol, that "they bare it between two upon a staff."\* The pomegranates and figs were in proportion. In fact, the land was so fertile that it seemed to be "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass."†

God gave Moses laws which were simply the enlargement of the Ten Commandments; and had these laws been obeyed, there could no strong monopolies have grown up in Palestine, neither could there have been the rich, to oppress the poor. Had the laws been observed, there would have been neither rich nor poor in Palestine. There would have been differences, and the industrious and

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\* Num. xiii., 23. † Deut. viii., 7-9.

economical would have had more than the improvident and the less industrious. But they would have all been the common people. Such abundance flowed into this country as never was the lot of any nation before nor since. The people foolishly and against God's will threw down the patriarchal form of government and demanded a king. Nevertheless, God raised up David the king, a godly man whose rule was emphatically a government for the people. The result was that in his son's time, Solomon's, silver was as plentiful as stones on the streets, and Solomon put enough gold in the temple to enrich a nation.

When the Queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem and saw all these riches, "there was no more spirit in her, and she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard."\*

Palestine was the crossway between the occident and orient. Merchants from Egypt must pass through it on their way to Syria and other northern points. The nations of the earth paid tribute to her. The kings of Tarshish and the isles of the sea brought presents.

Palestine is one hundred and forty miles long, by about seventy miles wide, varying from twenty-five to ninety miles. The deep valley at the Jordan, of

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\*1 Kings x., 5-7.

the Dead Sea, is 1,300 feet below the level of the sea, and the mountains of Lebanon rise to an altitude of 9,200 feet above the sea, making a variation of altitude of 10,500 feet. The consequence is that among the fruits and animals which it contains, there are representatives of the flora and the fauna of every other region on the globe, from the Arctic circle to the tropics. The plants of Northern Europe flourish on Lebanon, those of Central Europe at the level of Jerusalem and Carmel; while those of the West Indies are found on the plains of Jericho and the Jordan. Some of the animals represent the denizens of the Alpine desert, and others the fauna of the plains of India and the rivers of Africa. Thus the country supplied the natural symbolism that would appear more or less intelligible to men of every nation.

For one thousand years after Solomon, monopolies grew and rich men flourished. Their cities were sacked and their people carried away captive. For six hundred years the faithful prophets of God warned, reproved, wept and threatened. But their voices became silent, and a prophet was not heard for four hundred years, till the rousing voice of John the Baptist began ringing up and down the Jordan, and saying, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."\*

Over all the sins of the people God kept the land fertile till Jesus came. We are told when Jesus saw a fig tree that had no figs on it, He cursed it

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\*Math. iii., 2.

and it withered away. A fruitless tree had no business in Palestine. The little Sea of Galilee swarmed with fish and was a busy waterway. On its banks were miles of palaces and fashionable residences; wealthy cities whose streets were thronged with merchants and rabbis. Palestine nineteen hundred years ago was the most densely populated country on earth. The name of a Jewish merchant meant wealth and power in every nation of the world.

Over and over again, God warned them by the mouth of Moses not to forget the spirit of the God who had led them out of Egypt, out of their house of bondage, and not to go after other gods, the gods of mammon which the heathen nations of the world worshiped. But they did, and when Jesus came to the world, He found the fiercest struggle for wealth moving in one grand organization all over the world, that never was before and has not been since till in this present generation. There was abundance in Palestine for all its thronging masses, and every man, with reasonable diligence, could have owned his own home and commanded the forces which provided him his livelihood. But the world was caught in shameful disgrace, when Jesus, complaining against it, said: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." \* A more faithful workman never pushed a plane nor drove an axe into wood, than Jesus. Yet, in His ten years of

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\* Math. viii., 20.

work as a carpenter, He was not able to get enough ahead to buy Himself a home ; but all that He could do was to support His mother, who was probably a widow, and His younger brothers and sisters. The productive powers of nature were tied up by the monopoly of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and in this they were given the support and color of religion by the scribes, and so enabled to hold their grip on the masses. If wealth could blush for its sins, it would blush when caught so sinning against the Son of God. But, to-day, in this land of ours, called by Christ's name, ten thousand times ten thousand of Jesus' brethren are so suffering from the monopoly of the wealthy, and the charge still stands : " Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me." \*

The divine rule is, " If any man provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." † But how, then, shall we measure that man's sins who, from his superior strength, greedily grasps and ties up nature's productive powers so that thousands, from his over-reachings, cannot obey the divine command, and their families must go homeless and without the comforts of this life?

The Jewish people came from the loins of Abraham, the father of the faithful. Their peculiar monotheistic religion separated them from the nations of the earth, who were all polytheistic. God gave them Palestine, which lay largely between the

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\* Math. xxv., 45. † 1 Tim. v., 8.



sea and the River Jordan, the mountains on the north and the desert on the south. He made them the depository of divine truth, gave them a goodly land, fought their battles for them and hedged them about on every side. So David said: "He hath not dealt so with any nation."\*

In like manner, we can trace the designs of the same kind Providence in our land and nation. We are a nation\* fortified on either side by two great oceans, the gulf on the south, and peaceful, kind neighbors on the north. The expanse of an independent people, the diversity of climate and the variety of a world is under the stars and stripes.

As a people, we were conceived in the prayers, poverty and sterling integrity of the Pilgrim fathers, who landed from the *Mayflower* on Plymouth Rock. We were born into the world as a nation in the blood and struggles of the Revolutionary War. Our nation was baptized with the awakening principle: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."†

The thirteen colonies were poor, but they had the approval of God, the divine favor rested upon them, and they grew as no nation had ever done before. The eyes of the people began to be opened to the fact that it was a disgrace, a crime and a curse for a people who called themselves free to

\* Ps. cxlvii. 20. † Declaration of Independence.

have the system of slavery among them. Early in the sixties the nation was precipitated into civil war, and before the war was ended, God led the armies in such a way that the slaves went free. Although this was only a little over a quarter of a century ago, there have been more discoveries of the storehouses of earth and a wakening of the sleeping powers of nature, than was ever done in one thousand years previous.

When the Saviour was upon the earth, He spoke of Himself as the Good Shepherd, and the sheep-fold He is setting up on earth. He confined Himself to no nation, tongue or kindred. The Jews had misconstrued their commanded seclusiveness from other nations into a haughty vanity over them. Jesus told the Jews: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." \*

His sheep were those who needed His help and whose natures were capable of feeling the sweet influence of brotherly love, had it not been hardened in the sin of selfishness and hypocrisy. Some of His sheep had wandered far away, driven from virtue by the poisonous winds and storms; nevertheless, they were His sheep, and His pity seemed to go out most tenderly to those who were out on the barren and naked rocks of poverty, suffering from the wrongs of strong and selfish men. I do not wish to make more out of the parable of the

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\* John x., 16.

Good Shepherd and the Sheepfold than there is in it, and I am sure I do not in making it apply to the kingdom of heaven that Jesus Christ is setting up on earth, for the temporal good and comfort of His brethren, as well as to the heaven above. The merits of Jesus Christ's sufferings and death, His life and teachings, apply to the wants, necessities and comforts of the body, as well as to the inner life and spiritual growth in grace; to the making of our homes on earth happy, pleasant and well supplied with food and raiment, as well as the mansions He has prepared above for all those who love and follow Him on earth. Jesus Christ brought *life* and immortality to light through His gospel. We have emphasized His teachings on immortality and the glory of the mansions which are beyond, none too much, but we have not emphasized as we should, His teachings where He taught us how to make the kingdom of heaven He is setting up on earth apply to our everyday needs and wants of this present life. While He taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," \* we should never forget that He has pointed out the way by which the daily needs of His children should be provided for and distributed among them. Jesus says: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." † The pasture He gives His sheep is not only that sweet love in believing on His name, and that abiding trust which makes them contented with their lot, whatever it may be,

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\* Math. vi., 11. † John x., 9.

and throws such a halo of peace and joy around them that even cabins and prisons seem like palaces to them who believe; but He actually turns and will turn the homes of His children from cabins, prisons and slums, into fine, comfortable residences, with all that nature can give to make them enjoy life, in the use of God's temporal and physical blessings, and His peace which passeth all understanding, to purify their hearts and teach them how to use the things of this world as not abusing them. There is every evidence, both in the Scriptures and in the world, that God intends His children should live comfortably and happy in this present life. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." \* The opening storehouses of nature's resources to supply the wants of men show that God has made His world with abundance for His children. While amidst all this plenty, if the poor are reduced to the mere necessities of life, the kind Heavenly Father's intentions are frustrated by the intervention and interposition of strong and selfish men, who seize more than their share, merely to gratify their greed, and so make the poor to suffer. They are the wolves which have entered into the sheepfold and are devouring Jesus' sheep.

Jesus says: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it

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\* Ps. xxiii., 1, 2.

more abundantly."\* Or, as the marginal reading has it, "that they may have abundance." The world should have no hesitation in receiving the truth and recognizing the fact that the teachings of Jesus Christ are the only sure way to the true happiness and prosperity of any people. There is no question that any man who attempts to lead us in the ways of prosperity or brotherly love in any other name than Jesus', will be found a thief and robber. Pure love from God and Jesus Christ, making us love our fellow-men, is the only solution for the ills of the world. You will notice that we do not say Church membership, nor science; no, nothing but the love of Jesus.

This age of great fortune-building has fired men with a wild mania for wealth and money-getting, of which it is hardly too much to say, we are cutting one another's throats in business, like the wild savages who formerly inhabited this country. Business is almost a system of the strong taking advantage of the weak. Everything is money. Not only has honesty given way before this great influx of the dominion of selfishness, but even affection has abdicated the throne of the hearts of the people. The brother who is successful in business moves to an aristocratic avenue of the city, cuts the acquaintance and familiar association of his poorer brother and his family, who stay on some back street, because the true spirit of the incarnate God of heaven dwells in the poorer brother, and will not

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\* John x., 10.

let him rob and plunder from the weak and needy. The mother and sisters and all the relations speak in the highest praises of the rich brother, and even the poor man's wife wishes in her heart that it had been her good fortune when she married to have struck the brother who got rich.

Women unblushingly say that they will not marry where there is no money to sweeten the marriage. And we must not blame them too much. This awful reign of selfishness, fired on one side by the few in large accumulations of wealth, and fanned on the other by the severe struggle of the many to get a respectable living, and all the time is growing worse, cannot help polluting even the love of women. We can hardly expect a girl to give up a \$60 salary to marry, and divide a \$40 salary with a husband, and even that uncertain. There are few girls and men, if any, who would not rather marry than remain single, and would, were it not for the fear of poverty. The curse of the large increasing number of bachelors and old maids is fairly to be charged up against this inordinate thirst for money. At God's great bar, the homes which are never formed, but should have been, and the joys that these people have lost that they should have had, will be applied to the account of the greedy, wealthy man, who in hell will lift up his eyes being in torment, because he held powers of the productiveness of the world that these people should have had.

Our Continental European friends say, "In



America the flowers have no odor, the fruit no taste and the women no hearts." All is business. It is business at the tea table. It is business at the party. It is business by the way of travel. It is business in the house of God, and the voice of the money-changer is heard, so that it is out of the question for the poor man in many cases to attend church and have the gospel preached to him. "From the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness: and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely."\* There are \$800 ministers, and \$1,000 ministers, and \$1,200 ministers, and \$2,000 ministers, and \$4,000 ministers, and \$5,000 ministers, and so on. "They that preach the gospel should live of the gospel,"† is right and just; but with some, the clerical profession has become a cold matter of business, and with many it is entirely too much so. Against such Ezekiel complains bitterly, saying, "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock."‡

"Some clergy there are of the hypocrite stock,  
Who care more for the fleece than they do for the flock;  
And these you will know before you install,  
For the larger the salary, the louder they'll call."

From these men we need expect no help in the great struggle to turn back the tide of selfishness which is covering the land and threatens to engulf us all. "But he that is a hireling, and not the

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\*Jer. vi., 13. †1 Cor. ix., 14. ‡Ezek. xxxiv., 2-3.

shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep. The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." \* There are many obedient ministers to the will of the Great Shepherd, who will do as He did and preach His gospel, no matter at what cost, danger or sacrifice. As God has, in all great struggles for liberty and freedom, raised up men for the emergency, so He will raise up men to fight this great battle when He shall gather His hosts at Armageddon, the mountain of the gospel, or of fruits and apples.

It was two thousand years from the loss of Eden, until Abraham, the father of the Hebrew race. From Abraham to Jesus Christ was two thousand years more, and it is now approaching two thousand years since Jesus was born into the world in human flesh. At the time Jesus came to the world, commerce was free all over the earth, ready for a world's movement; and had men accepted Him, a mighty reformation could have been brought about in one generation. The same condition exists to-day, with speed of travel greatly quickened. As Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives, just after He had closed His last public address in the temple, and His crucifixion was evident from the rage of the people, He said to His disciples: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a

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\* John x., 12-15.

witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come.”\* As if He had said, When brotherly love fills the hearts of the people who know My gospel, so that they will send it to all the other nations of the world, then will the end come. “The grain of mustard seed will then be sown in the field.”† “The leaven will then be hid in the meal which will leaven the whole lump.”‡

The angel is flying in the midst of heaven, “having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.”§ To-day, there is not a nation under heaven which does not have the gospel preached in it as a witness. And this fact is being emphasized more and more every year, by foreign missions. The times are auspicious and augur that some great world’s movement is close at hand. The stately steppings of the power of the gospel may be very near, and doubtless are, if men will arise in the armor of brotherly love in Christ and do their duty. The weal or the woe of coming generations may hang as much on our determination as it did on the choice of our first parents, or the men in the time when Jesus Christ was on earth.

The prophecies and warnings of the Scriptures, the teachings and life of Jesus, have special application to this generation.

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\* Math. xxiv., 14. † Math. xiii., 31. ‡ Math. xiii., 33. § Rev. xiv., 6.

## CHAPTER VI.

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### THE COMMON PEOPLE.

**T**HE unwonted kindness with which Jesus Christ treated the poor, and even the erring ones among them, lifting them up and pointing them to purer lives on earth, as forerunners of lives in the pure heaven at God's right hand forevermore, together with the blessings which He pronounced upon them as a class, is a marked feature of His life and teachings. His life came in sharp contrast with the teachings of Plato, who taught the doctrine that there was a heaven for the rich, the refined, the poets, the orators and statesmen, but left the masses wallowing in ignorance, debauchery and crime, without a hope of heaven to lift them above their temptations. In the same manner, the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees looked upon the poor as little better than dogs and heathen, and called them scabs.

There is no account of a single compliment that Jesus Christ ever paid to the rich, and instead of the patronizing spirit shown by people in general to them, both He and John, His forerunner, repulsed them at the very threshold of His

kingdom of heaven, whenever they attempted to enter.

His mother prophesied of Him while he was yet in her womb, in talking with the mother of John the Baptist, "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away."\* The mother of Jesus was only echoing and quoting what Isaiah had prophesied of Him seven hundred years before.

All through His ministry, from His opening sermon up in Nazareth, till He closed His earthly career, was an unbroken defence of the poor, or common people, against their oppressors, and an attempt to lift them up and better their condition. He took for His first text :

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

"Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor ;

"He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,

"And recovering of sight to the blind ;

"To set at liberty them that are bruised,

"To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

"And he closed the book and gave it back to the minister, and sat down : and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened upon him. And he began to say unto them, To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears." †

Here is the text without the sermon, except the

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\* Luke i., 52, 53. † Luke iv., 18-21. (R. V.)

first sentence. From the text we can judge the nature of the sermon, and the text says that the spirit of the Lord was upon Jesus Christ, because it had anointed Him to preach the good tidings to the poor. There was no need to record the formal sermon. His life and the New Testament were the great sermon from this text. The preaching of the gospel to the poor, or the common people, or the masses — for this is the sense in which Jesus seemed to use the word poor — was the announced and distinct character of Jesus Christ's teachings and mission to the world.

In His inaugural address on the mount, His opening sentence was the key to all which should follow, and is, as Matthew puts it, "Blessed are the poor in spirit;"\* or, as Luke has it, "Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God,"† as if it did not matter which way it was said, for the people spoken of were one and the same. The kingdom Jesus Christ was setting up on earth was for the common people, and was a type and forerunner of the heaven above, and the rich would not and could not enter into it, for Jesus would not permit it to be so.

The freedom of the masses means the elevation of the social standard. It was to the common people, whom Jesus said: "Ye are the light of the world;" "Ye are the salt of the earth."‡ But, if the common people be degraded and sunken in vice, the light is under a bushel, and the salt has

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\* Math. v., 3. † Luke vi., 20. ‡ Math. v., 13, 14.



lost its savor and is good for nothing. The common people are the bulwark, the ballast and the brains of any free and prosperous nation. Where these are free and enlightened, the nation is prosperous; but where the power goes into the hands of the few, the common people sink out of influence into vice, and the nation is dead and her glory departed.

James cautioned the people of his time, saying: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"\* We have not said all that is in this verse when we say that the poor in our churches have a richer faith than the wealthy have, although this is a fact. James does not make any distinction, or divide the poor into two classes, but it is the poor of whom he speaks. He says they are rich in faith and that they are heirs of the kingdom which God has promised to them that love Him. There are no exceptions filed, nor an intimation that any are left out.

It is a fact that the poor are governed more by the laws of brotherly love than the rich. The rich choose their friends and associates, rating them largely by the amount of money they have; while the poor choose their friends by affinities and personal attractions, which is the law of the angels and spirits of just men made perfect. The poor are governed more by affection and sympathy in their

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\*James ii., 5.

associations and dealings with their fellow-men. They have more respect for the good opinion of their fellow-men. The *vox populi*, the voice of God speaking through men, has its existence from the decisions of the common people. The common people, as a rule, are more conscientious and high-minded, from their condition, their minglings and dealings with men, than the rich.

The rich are not only governed socially by money and selfishness, but their sins are dictated by selfishness. They sin in cold blood. They plan their own path in life and bend every energy of their nature towards its accomplishment. The larger the field opens before them to commit their sins against God and men, in grasping the opportunities of the world and the productive powers of nature, the more they are delighted, the stronger their selfishness grows, the more their vanity and their pride is enlarged and the farther they drift away from sympathy for their fellow-men and from brotherly love. "Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." \*

Prudence and economy, in the man providing for his own, and, especially, his own household, becomes in them selfishness, stinginess, or, probably

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\* Ps. lxxiii., 6-8, 12.

more appropriately, hoggishness; but they call it good business management, and the crown with which the Lord awards superior ability, faithfulness and tact in their callings.

The sins of the poor are, for the most part, sins from weakness, and often caused by the unjust condition of society, made largely by the rich, assisted by their dupes. They are sins of which Paul wrote: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." \* They are overtaken in sin, and do not designedly and determinedly go into it. Temptations have been strong and, at an unguarded moment, they have taken a step which makes it hard to recover the hold on virtue that was lost. Their sins are more against themselves than anyone else, and circumstances over which they had no control often largely determine the course of their downfall and ruin. They call more for our pity than for our condemnation.

Jesus preached the gospel of love to the poor, and in a loving and tender manner; but He unsheathed the sword of divine justice when He met the rich. It was to the rich that He came not to send peace, but a sword. The poor have a hard enough time in the world from the oppression of the wrongs of the rich. They need sympathy, and are tractable and teachable, therefore, mild and loving measures will win, lead and control them from error and sin

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\* Gal. vi., 1.

to better ways. But the rich are self-conceited, self-willed, accustomed to control, and will not follow where there is no money in it. They understand profit and loss. No class of men can be so certainly depended upon to move as they, where gain or loss of money is the motive power. This is business. But the cords of sympathy in them are weak and often broken. They were selfish by nature, which led them to make money, and every dollar they made strengthened this evil nature in them. The poor, as a class, were not by nature so selfish, and whatever they had was not developed by their habits of life; so they are more considerate of the wishes and welfare of others. Their position in life makes them mutually dependent, consequently, accommodating and helpful to those with whom they have to do. It was from the poor Samaritan's character that our Lord found His example of a good neighbor, over the well-fed priest and wealthy Levite. The Samaritan, from his penury, relieved the hunger and distress of the man on his way to Jericho who had fallen among thieves, while the wealthy passed by on the other side. It is worthy of note that this was in a lonely road, where few went, and had the priest or the Levite relieved this man's sufferings, probably no one would have seen it, nor would it have been told in Jerusalem, so the Levite and the priest passed by on the other side.

We may scoffingly say there are lazy fellows who want to tramp and will not work. And so some

of them are, and we can abuse them all we want to, and with freedom, for they have no chance to make answer or reply. But the truth is, only a few of these men are naturally so. They are largely the product and condition of the state of society. If they had, by nature, an inclination in this direction, correct and equitable business associations and relations would have developed the most of them into good and industrious men. But they were disappointed; hunting for work and finding none, they became discouraged, their hearts failed them, they lay down on the race-course of life, and gave up ever touching the goal of being anybody in the world, and so became outcasts from society, and eke out a miserable existence. Of course, they should have had more nerve and not given up so easily, but theirs was a sin of weakness, and not of intention; neither did they invite it, nor desire to indulge it. The lines of life have fallen to them in hard places, and the rich man has made it so. If the rich look down on these men and despise them, they despise their own work. And if they despise that which they have caused, what must God think of them and their conduct in making conditions so that this large class of unhappy men must be the result? Is it any wonder that Jesus condemned the conduct of the lives of the wealthy, and that His forgiving sympathy was so great to the poor, that He dealt so tenderly with them and so gently re-proved their sins, for they were being wronged out

of the enjoyment of this life which God intended they should have.

When the multitude followed Jesus, not because they saw His miracles, but because they did eat of the loaves and were filled, He, tenderly as a parent, chided them, calling their attention to this selfish trait in their character and conduct, saying to them, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." \*

In His reproof, He was met with no self-conceited contention, nor His person subjected to unkind criticisms in return, as was always the case with the scribes and wealthy Pharisees and Sadducees, when warned of their danger or reproved for their sins. But, with the tractable demeanor of children, they answered and said unto Him, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" †

The poor drunkard often drinks because he is too weak to resist the appetite for strong drink. He wishes he were free from the appetite, and is ashamed of himself for his weakness. The poor street-walker made her first wrong step in obedience to the highest passion of her nature, only illegally. For her mistake, she was ostracized from society, and now she walks the streets, not because she loves her avocation, but to supply the honest demands of her nature—food and clothing. Not many are there because it is their choice, but

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\*John vi., 27. †John vi., 28.



misery put them there, and necessity holds them there. Did we know the story of their lives, we would probably pity them, from the fact that they have been more sinned against than they have sinned. Did we know the longings of their hearts when out on the sea of sin, how they look back to the shores of honor and purity, and long for them more than ever ship-wrecked sailor wished for land, we would not be surprised when novel writers, to be true to nature, represent that when many of them come to die, they turn to Jesus, and wish they had not lived a life of sin, asking Him to have mercy on their souls. But let us hear the words of one when dying in the gutters of the streets of Cincinnati, in mid-winter, and while there, penning "The Beautiful Snow," which the London *Spectator* says is the finest poem ever written by an American. I will quote a few of her verses :

"Once I was pure as the beautiful snow—but I fell,  
Fell like the snow-flakes, from heaven to hell.  
Fell to be trampled as filth in the street,  
Fell to be scoffed, to be spit on and beat ;

Pleading, cursing, dreading to die,  
Selling my soul to whoever would buy,  
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,  
Hating the living and fearing the dead.  
Merciful God! have I fallen so low?  
Yet I was once like the beautiful snow.  
How strange it should be that the beautiful snow  
Should fall on a sinner with no where to go;  
How strange it would be when the night comes again,

If the snow and the ice strike my desperate brain.  
Fainting, freezing, dying alone,  
Too wicked for prayer, too weak for a moan  
To be heard in the streets of a crazy town,  
Gone mad in the joy of the snow coming down ;  
To be and to die in my terrible woe,  
With a bed and a shroud of the beautiful snow."

I give this as a sample of what are doubtless the death-bed longings and heartaches of many of those poor, unfortunate girls. And can we doubt for one moment that the Saviour's pitying eye does not take notice of and claim many of them for His pure home on high? There is something in long and large indulgence in immorality and intemperance which tends to disgust, satiate, and the sinner often turns to his Saviour for relief. But in wealth-getting, the more a man gets, the more he wants; it develops vanity, pride, selfishness, self-will, and binds a man as with a cart rope.

It was of one who had men under his charge, that the Lord said, "But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."\* This awful doom and suffering are spoken of as being the portion of

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\*Math. xxiv., 48-51.

a man who is able to have others in his employ, and at least was not a poor man. The first sin mentioned is the beating of the servants, and this is evidently the sin upon which the condemnation rested most heavily, and the drinking and drunkenness was rather an attendant, than primary.

When the centurion, a heathen man, came to the Saviour at Capernaum, pleading for the life and recovery of his servant, the large-hearted man and his generosity brought to Jesus' mind, by contrast, the scribes and wealthy Pharisees and Sadducees, holding the productive powers of the land of Palestine in their hands, while they were indifferent to the suffering they were causing among the masses. So He said to those standing by, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."\*

While the Saviour pointed out sins both of omission and commission, which the poor as well as the rich might commit, that would render them unfit for the kingdom of God and heaven, yet He never singled out a poor man as being in hell, like He did the rich man; nor the poor man dying in the immediate disgrace of his sins, as in His parable of the rich fool, when his ground had brought

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\*Math. viii., 10-12.

forth plentifully. It is said: "And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruit and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"\*

Rich men live in their selfishness and greed, and all the powers of their being are given to gratify their greediness, little above and alike in principle with the swine; for them there is no hope of reformation, nor reason for call for sympathy from God; like brutes they live and like brutes they die, and death calls them often in the height of their iniquity.

Whoever heard of the plutocrat in his death bemoaning the life he had lived in absorbing the opportunities of his fellow-men, and regretting his so-called successful business career of raking in millions, of which before God he had robbed his fellow-man? David, the Psalmist, says of the wealthy, "There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm."†

But no faithful minister has preached long whose diary does not contain accounts of drunkards and dissolute men reformed and saved to lives of purity

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\*Luke xii., 17-20. †Ps. lxxiii., 4.

and honor, and also of death-bed repentances of the same. The poor thief on the cross was converted and is in heaven to-day. Also, Lazarus, the beggar, is there.

We do not say that none but the rich go to hell, for there are sins which the poor do and may commit, that will render them unfit for the pure, sweet society of brotherly love of the kingdom of God on earth, and will necessarily unfit them for the purity of that perfect society of heaven. But we do find that the sin of selfishness is the most blighting, damning sin that ever inhabits the human heart. We find also that there is nothing which so feeds and fattens selfishness as rapid money-getting and large money-holding. It is the fountain-head of sin, from whence flow poverty, suffering and crime. We can therefore see why Jesus pointed hell and damnation in the path before the wealthy and rich men. Selfishness is the characteristic sin of the rich, and selfishness is the sin of the devil; so it also seems highly fitting that these rich men should go to the everlasting punishment, or hell, "prepared for the devil and his angels." In the case of the rich man in hell, he was told by Abraham that his position was fixed beyond hope of change or pardon.

On the other hand, might it not be in keeping with the kind economy of Jesus, and His gentle, forgiving manner of dealing with the weak and those defrauded out of this life's privileges, if they pollute themselves, by reason of their environments,

with sin which unfits them for heaven, that they should not be sent where those selfish plutocrats could impose upon them throughout all eternity? But might it not be that they go to Hades, and not Gehenna—to the place of the lost, but not to the lake of fire?

The poor drunkard, who unwittingly may have gained an appetite for strong drink, which became his master before he was aware of it, and led him bound hand and foot, or the poor fellow whose appetite was inherited from his father, or the woman who is a sinner, may all be where they are from no choice of their own. Since many of them are the product of a wrongly constituted state of society, need we be astonished that Jesus has not left one personal condemning sentence on record against the drunkard, or that He so freely offered pardon and purity to her who was a sinner, because they had been sinned against a great deal more than they had sinned.

When the drunkard dies, he will leave his stomach in the grave, and go free, unshackled, into the world beyond. The woman who is a sinner will leave her environments, above which she could not rise while in the world, on earth behind her. But the selfish man's sin is on his soul, and it will go to the bar of God and into eternity with him. The sin of selfishness is a sin of self-determination; it is deliberate, it acts in cool blood, it does not act compelled by the pressure of circumstances, it is not the result of weakness; but, in the rich, it has its de-



velopment from superior strength, and gathers as years go by and wealth increases. They are more and more confirmed while they live, and this being not due to any surroundings, it is logical that they will grow more and more fixed in their sin, and so it was of them that the Saviour said, The judge at the great assize will say, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, for in my distress and sufferings (or, which is the same, the poor, my brethren), ye did not minister, feed or clothe me.

We are instructed by the apostle: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; and so fulfil the law of Christ." \* If this is our duty, to fulfil the law of Christ, is it too much to suppose that Jesus may exercise the same magnanimity, even beyond the probation of this life? The Scriptures tell us that when Jesus died, He immediately departed to hell† "and went and preached unto the spirits in prison. For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."‡ They were oppressed, and had no chance to be the architects of their fortunes or character on earth while in the flesh, so may not Jesus give them an opportunity, freed from these men and circumstances, and let them be tested as free men, whether they will choose God, brotherly love, purity and kindness, or the devil and selfishness.

\* Gal. vi., 1, 2. † Acts ii., 27. ‡ 1 Peter iii., 19, and iv., 6.

When on the very border-land of the world beyond, Jesus forgave the thief on the cross beside Him, saying to him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."\* May not the thief have gone with the Saviour to Hades, preparatory to his going to the highest heaven, where God resides; and was there with Jesus to corroborate His preaching, the story of His life on earth, His sufferings, His death, and His pardoning mercy? I do not wish to dogmatize here. I rather wish to ask the question.

Babylon was the queen of finance of the earth. She controlled the banking and monetary movements of the world. The name of Babylon, from the strength of the operations of her bulls and bears, was a synonym for wealth and money power. John, in his revelation of those things which must shortly come to pass, saw "Great Bābylon fallen and become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. The merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wail-

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\*Luke xxiii., 43.

ing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness! For in one hour is she made desolate.”\* This was not the historic Babylon which John saw in his vision of things which would come to pass, for the city of Babylon had fallen and been destroyed years before. But it was a vision of the doom of the plutocratic power on earth, which God will bring when the common people shall throw off the dominion of selfishness and live in brotherly love one with another on earth. The next verse reads, “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.”†

After this came forth the “white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And on his thigh a name is written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And the beast (Babylon) and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that received the mark of the beast; and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”‡

Immediately after this, John saw the “angel

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\* Rev. xviii., 2, 3, 15, 16, 19. † Rev. xviii., 20. ‡ Rev. xix., 11, 16, 19, 20.

come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled.”\*


When the people rise to the high, pure atmosphere of brotherly love, God will not only overthrow plutocracy, but He will bind the devil and shut him also up in hell, that bottomless pit burning with fire and brimstone.

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\*Rev. xx., 1, 2, 3.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE LORD'S PRAYER.

“UR Father which art in heaven.” On the fatherhood of God rests the brotherhood of man. The relationship existing between children is not direct, one with another, but it runs up through the parents, uniting the children in one common brotherhood. Men are all brethren, one with another, because God is our common Father. God's universal fatherhood of all men makes every man and woman as much the son and daughter of God as we, or anyone else; and so all have equal rights, before God, to the good things of this world.

The love among children to each other springs from the love they have for their parents, and is commensurate with it. The strength of a man's love to God is the measure and source of his true and abiding love for his fellow-men. Here we find the reason why God or Jesus made love to God the first commandment, and the second like unto it, the love of man for his neighbor.

As Jesus said: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and

with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. The second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”\*

True love of our fellow-men finds its reason and derives its power from God. One family, we dwell in Him. The world is God's house and we are God's children in it.

There is one province in human emotions which critics dare not invade, and only one—that is a mother's love. In the fall, this affection seemed to have almost escaped the effects of its blighting curse. Inspiration offers no corrections, or even a rule to direct it; but uses it as an illustration to teach men the character of God's love, and only adds that God's love is certainly constant, while there is a possibility of a mother's intermitting. If the child is sick, the mother's love is more excited. If the son is wayward and hated of men, her love grows more firm and visible. If he is unfortunate and the world goes hard with him, her love seems to grow more intense and to be rekindled. Her love is not logic; neither does it obey the dictates of society. It acts under the inclinations of a mother's heart, and only this. It sits as a queen in the world. It is dictated to by none. It is the same in all. There is nothing in humanity which all men so admire, honor and adore.

The parental government is the highest form of

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\* Math. xxii., 37-40.

government among men. It is the most equitable. It has the most love in it. It is more like God's government than any other. In it there are no favors given to greater age or larger strength. All are alike, male and female, strong and weak; "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."\* Such is family government and such is the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The family is an oasis of brotherly love in the wide desert of selfishness in the business world. The children too young, sick or lame and unable to work, pay no board, neither are they paupers in their father's house. What belongs to the parents is the children's; and this children know by an instinct, which no child coming into the world has ever failed to recognize. The parents have their children, not to see how much they can make out of them; but they are theirs to minister unto and to provide for. Even the brutes know this and obey the law during the helpless time of their young.

Parents do not command their children to obey and respect them from a sense of the love of reverence and honor, as ambitious potentates do their subjects; but it is solely for the children's good and their honor. A proper respect, love and honor from the child to the parents, as its superiors, are the grounds of a good citizen and a Christian life in mature years. Here is the reason, evidently, why

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\* Gal. iii., 28.



Jehovah made the first half of the Decalogue, love to God. The transition from the first half—love to God—to the second half, love to men, logically and beautifully is made in the love and obedience of the child to the parent, giving as a reason for the command of obedience, “that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”\* When Moses had delivered these commandments to the children of Israel, he told them: “The Lord commandeth us to do these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always.”†

So, while it is man's duty to render praise, honor, love, adoration, and be in submission to God and Jesus Christ for His wonderful exaltation, the perfection of His attributes, the supreme loveliness of His character, and His matchless works of love to the sons of men; yet He never demands this from us unless there is coupled with it and from it flows the direct results of our good and highest honor. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.”‡

Never was there a man on earth so sweetly modest as Jesus. His modesty, if nothing else, would have forbidden Him asking anything merely for His own glory. His modesty often impelled Him, when He had performed some great miracle, to forbid His disciples and those around Him from publishing it; “And He charged them that they should not make Him known.”§ His life was a ministry

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\*Deut. v., 6. †Deut. vi., 24. ‡Ps. ciii., 13. §Math. xii., 16.

of service to and for others, and He was the servant of the poorest of men.

To the scribes and Pharisees He said : " I receive not honor from men."\* " I seek not mine own glory ; if I honor myself, my honor is nothing."† That theology is exactly incorrect which teaches that Jesus Christ demands worship and honor from men which is in any way akin to the pomp and power of earthly princes and potentates.

The older children act as quasi-parents to their younger brothers and sisters. The strong brother protects and cares for his weaker and more defenceless sister. The sick child is the center of affection and the object of care and solicitude of the entire family.

Jesus Christ came to the world in the character of an older brother, and exhibited this relation in its highest and perfect form, showing us how to behave ourselves with our fellow-men. It was He " who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil."‡ He taught men how to live so that they might attain to the highest happiness socially, and fit themselves for the pure world of light and love beyond the shores of time. He also taught men how to live so that the earth would yield up her stores, and all might have and enjoy the good things of the productive powers of nature, and His strongest condemnations were aimed against men who were frustrating this design of our kind Creator. " Jesus called them unto him, and said,

\* John v., 41. † John viii., 50, 54. ‡ Acts x., 38.

Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."\* "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."† "But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."‡

The manner of Christ's love must be and is the character of the love of all His true followers; and this is something for which no amount of experience or profession and obedience to the commandments of men can be made a substitute. The conduct of Jesus Christ will be reflected from the life of every man who has the spirit of Christ abiding in his heart. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."§ With His spirit in our hearts, we must work the works of righteousness and exercise love toward all men as He did, is a law as inflexible as that the warm sunshine and rains of spring will make nature put on her new dress of living green.

The tree which puts not forth her buds and

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\* Matt. xx., 25-28. † John xv., 12, 13. ‡ Rom. v., 8. § Rom. viii., 9.

leaves in the spring, is dead. John, at the ripe old age of eighty, wrote: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."\* The brethren here spoken of are, doubtless, those whom Jesus styled His brethren; that is, the poor and needy. And further on in the same letter, John writes: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"†

Our love is not only to be like Christ's love, but His love is the measure of our love. "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."‡ The wealthy monopolist who gives one per cent. of his income to relieve the suffering of the poor, and then goes on tying up the opportunities of the productive powers of nature, so that the poor become poorer, while he becomes richer, does not love the poor as Jesus Christ did, when He gave His life for them. As long as he does so, the condemnation is upon him: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."§ There is not a moment to the wealthy man or plutocrat that, in his mind's eye, he cannot see hundreds suffering and in need

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\* 1 John iii., 14. † 1 John iii., 16, 17. ‡ John 15, 12. § Math. xxv., 45.

of money which his over-supply would relieve, and the larger part never would have been, had not he, and others like him, tied up the resources of nature from the reach of the masses.

We perceive the love of God by His laying down His life for us, and the command is that we ought to be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren, if needs be ; and so, certainly, it is not too great a gift to part with all the wealth we may have, for the good of others, to remove their honest and oppressive wants. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life,"\* said Satan, from his wide knowledge of men, and here he once spoke what is true.

There is no form of sin that causes so much misery and suffering among men, as the selfish greed of a few, piling up fortunes, which compels the millions to toil, and for their labors receive only the plainest living, and many of them suffer hunger and cold and nakedness in this, our land of plenty.

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." †

For two thousand years, Jesus' followers have been praying these words, as He commanded. And in spite of the fetters of forms and doctrines of men which the gospel has ever struggled under, in the last few centuries, Christian civilization has brought our race from the lowest of men to a

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\* Job ii., 4. † Math. vi., 9, 10.

generation of people with more general intelligence than any ever before.

But, great as the distance may be between us and barbarism, it is not so great as that which lies before us to be covered, ere we reach the fullness of the kingdom of heaven, or brotherly love, which Jesus taught us to pray for, and which He will surely establish on earth.

And when He has, every man will sit under his own vine and fig tree, with none to molest or make him afraid.\* Then every man can, and will, own his own home and house, and no mortgage will ever threaten or drive him hence. Then men will work fewer hours of the day, and spend more time in recreation, in social and intellectual development. These few hours are all any man will care to work, and there will be plenty of work for every man who wishes and is willing to work. Then there will be none who are wealthy, and absorb the productive powers of nature, but abundance will be within the easy reach of all.

The great men of this coming age will be those who are the most unmindful of self, who are the most abundant in good works, and help others to enjoy the life which God has given to men.

Mother nature will pour out her good things into the lap of plenty with as much greater profusion than she is now yielding up her wealth, as this is above that which she gave the red man who preceded us.

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\*Mich. iv., 4.

Isaiah, looking out from a loftier mount than Pisgah's height, viewed the kingdom of brotherly love on earth, towards which we are advancing, and heard and saw "The mountains and the hills breaking forth into singing, and all the trees of the field clapping their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."\*

Then men can and will live in obedience to Jesus' high command: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"† God never intended that men should be compelled to spend the best and greatest energies of their lives getting enough to eat and wear, but He did intend that man by invention should wake up the hidden and sleeping powers of nature, and roll back the curse, "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou return unto the ground,"‡ and live with dominion over nature, developing the image of God, with which God in the beginning created man. "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"§ Then will the lily of the field, which toils not, neither does it spin, and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed

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\* Is. lv., 12, 13. † Math. vi., 25. ‡ Gen. iii., 19. § Math. vi., 26.



like one of these, be looked upon as reflecting the lives of men. Then the wild mania for wealth, which makes men grab and grasp from one another the good things of life, will be adjudged barbarous and uncivilized, like unto the butchering of children and offering them as a sacrifice to propitiate the gods of harvest.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."\* When God's kingdom is established on earth, His good things will flow out in such abundance that men will live so that the birds of the air will be no more at leisure to enjoy themselves, and free from care, than they.

"Give us this day our daily bread."† Whoever asks for daily bread, for the things necessary to sustain life and make him comfortable and enjoy himself, may be assured he is asking in accordance with God's will. And the experience of God's children along this line, of how God has answered prayer and supplied the things necessary for them, how He has encamped round about them, hedged up their ways from dangers unseen and led them out finally into green valleys, where the living waters flow, is wonderful, and passes even the romance of fiction.

But he who asks God to help him to draw in more money than is his equitable portion, and hoards away wealth, asks God to act a lie against His revealed nature. To expect divine favor while

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\*Math. vi, 33. † Math. vi., 11.

leading such a life of selfishness is as great an absurdity as a devil talking of his own salvation.

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”\* Commentators have ever tried to say that the plain statement of this petition is not what Jesus meant, that it is not a forgiveness of our debts in a pecuniary sense, as it would plainly appear on the face of the command. But I will show in the next chapter that Jesus meant just what He said, and has no need of a commentator to tell Him or us what He intended to say; He knew Himself what He wanted to say, and said it.

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”† This can be translated with no violation to the original, “and lead us not *in* temptation, but deliver us from *the Evil One*.” Now when we take into consideration that in this world there are temptations on every hand, that we are born into the world among temptations, it is evident that God’s leadings of us, as the world is now, must be among temptations, but Jesus has taught us to ask that the world may be delivered from the Evil One; that his temptations may be removed from the earth and out of the world, and then God’s leadings of us on earth will not be in temptation, but where temptations are no longer. Oh, God, let it no longer be that the paths in which Thou wilt lead us here on earth shall lie amid temptations, but deliver us from the Evil One.

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and

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\* Math. vi., 12. † Math. vi., 13.

the glory, forever. Amen.”\* Jesus taught His disciples to rest so assuredly on His final victory and full establishment of His kingdom of love in the world, that He told them to put it in the present tense, as if it were already here. As sure as the sun rises and sets in her course over the world, so sure will brotherly love command the hearts and souls of men on earth, as it now commands the saints and angels in heaven. “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

The word amen means verily, certainly, firm, secure, true and faithful. Yes, everything commanded to be prayed for and promised here is firm, faithful, true, secure, certain, and will verily come to pass. AMEN.

Heaven's highest powers are engaged for the good of man. Then why should man be found not only fighting against God, but baffling his prayers, and frustrating the holiest interests on earth, of himself, his wife and children, and children's children after him.

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\*Math. vi., 13.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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### THE UNJUST STEWARD-

**I**N the parable of the unjust steward, God is represented as a "certain king." The other characters of the story are two of his subjects, one wealthy and the other a poor man. The sacred narrative runs thus: "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents (or over \$15,000,000). But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt."\*

The man worshiped the king, paying him the full respect due the king from a servant, or the duty God requires of men to Him. This man was not in shape to pay the \$15,000,000 then, but felt sure that if he had a little time given him, he could

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\* Math. xviii., 23-27.

raise the money and pay all the debt. It is evident that he was a wealthy man, or he never could have made so great a loan from the government, nor have had a reasonable hope of raising the money to pay so large a debt. However, instead of asking him to pay the debt, or any part of it, the king, being moved with compassion, forgave him all and let him go free. This represents the way God forgives sinners, and this is the force of the story so far. The sinner, unlike this man, never could pay the debt he owes offended justice, let him try ever so hard, or work as long as life may last. The design of the story is, to teach how great the forgiving mercy of God is toward the sinner in forgiving his sins, and that God does it freely and without the sinner paying any part of the debt. Illustrations are like circles; as a rule, they touch the thing which they illustrate only in one place, and when we attempt to make them cover more, we do violence to the author's intention.

The next part of the story is: "But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him a hundred pence (about \$14); and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto

their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”\*

The proportion that fourteen dollars is to fifteen million dollars, as the utmost that any common man can be indebted to a wealthy man, is as to the mercy God vouchsafes to the man whose sins He forgives. If a man whose sins God once forgave grows wealthy and begins to deal hard with the weak and poor, and makes them pay debts which oppress them, and takes away their comforts of life, he is not exercising towards his fellow-men the spirit which Jesus Christ did toward him. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”† That man who was forgiven by the great King of Heaven, and begins to oppress the poor and take advantage of their weakness in position by crowding them out and down in business, selling their property, which is to them their all, so that he may hold and increase his needless thousands; God will take away His pardoning grace from him, and the man will spend his

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\* Math. xviii., 28-35. † Rom. viii., 9.

eternity with the tormenting devils, whose example he imitated on earth.

When our Lord and Saviour gave the disciples the model prayer for men, He added only one foot-note, or explanation, which reads: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."\* As if He had thought, Of all places where men are most liable to lose the right way, it is in the petition where I have told them that the utmost measure they can ask for forgiveness of their sins is in proportion to the way they forgive the debts which their fellow-men owe them. So He emphasized it by saying that God would forgive the generous man who would not oppress the poor and needy, but that He would not forgive the man who oppressed the poor and needy, by collecting even that which the law would adjudge was his. The Greek word in the Lord's Prayer which is translated debts, means debts, pecuniary debts, in the original, and nothing else, as the word debts means in our language. In the foot-note He uses a different word to represent the same thing which is translated trespasses in the New Testament. But the word is not used in this sense by any of the Greek writers. In all the classics, the word means: "a fall beside, a false step, a blunder, a defeat." To those who have suffered from the tormenting oppressiveness of a debt which was more than

\* Math. vi., 14-15.



they could lift without sacrifice, how expressive the word the Saviour used to represent the character and nature of a debt which is too heavy for the poor man to carry, and who is struggling under it. A debt threatening to take away a man's property makes him feel that he has taken a false step in contracting it, that it was a blunder and is a defeat, that he has fallen down beside his creditor, at his mercy. The word translated trespasses in this story of the unjust steward is from the same word as that in the foot-note of our Lord's Prayer, and certainly means here pecuniary debts. Taking this word in its original meaning, then viewing our Lord's conclusion in this parable, the prayer which He taught us, and its foot-note, we see the import of His teachings.

It stands out as an essential part of the narrative, and must have its application, that this wealthy servant used no violence, according to the custom of his day; that he resorted to no fraudulent methods nor deceit in any way, to collect his money; that the money was legally coming to him; that he made use of the ordinary course of law, as was established by the so-called courts of justice; that he did nothing more than is done in all the courts of our land, and that he asked the courts to restore to him that which was lawfully his; yet for this the king is represented as taking back the forgiveness and release he had granted the rich man, and delivering him to the tormentors, till he should pay the debt.

The question arises : Is it wrong to collect debts? If a man gets in our debt, no matter how, must we abide his time to pay, and may he never pay us at all if he does not choose to do so? And if we attempt to collect it, shall we incur God's wrath and condemnation? Let us look carefully before we generalize. We must take into consideration all the essential elements in the narrative, together with a rational view of things as they are, before we draw our conclusion in the case.

The first servant was wealthy. He had needless thousands and millions. The fourteen dollars which he was trying to collect from the poor man formed no essential part of his happiness. Without it, life was as full and abundant of all needed good as with it. It only added that much more to his useless and needless wealth. But to the second servant, the poor man, the fourteen dollars was his all. It was his freedom, his opportunity in life rested on it, and without it he was a crushed man. This much is certainly taught by the parable, namely, no rich man should ever force a poor man to pay a debt, when to pay that debt sacrifices his dear interests of home and home comforts. In other words, wealth can never be counted out against home and family joys. The title which a man has to millions can never be weighed out against a title which is held by the divine oracle given on the morning of creation—as the sweat of thy face, thy dominion shall be.

This principle, in embryo, is in our exemption

laws, and enlarges where a man with a family has a greater exemption than a single man. In this law, the principle is recognized that there is a certain amount of property or money which every man is entitled to, beyond the power of a man's creditors. The law is a shelter to a common man. But the practical workings of the law are, for the most part, to protect the interests of one poor man against another man equally as poor. It often weighs down the small tradesman, who is obliged to give greater credit to get custom, while the larger dealer, who has a monopoly of the business, can refuse credit to all who are not certain pay.

The creditor certainly has a right to protection in law for that which he has committed to another in the avenues of trade. This is a principle which no nation has ever lost sight of, and never can, with impunity to the people. It is equity in dealing to protect the honest and confiding against the tricky and dishonest. But our exemption laws, good as they are, are very little in the way of the fortune-builder, in his progress. His money goes out protected by a first mortgage, first bonds, mechanic's liens, and against these there are no exemption laws.

Nearly all of our railroads were built by the money of the common people. This was true, without an exception, before the government began giving her lavish grants, which is also the money of the people. The men who built the roads do not own them to-day, neither do they nor their chil-

dren have anything for the investment. It was, in many cases, a clean steal on the part of the men who own the roads to-day, and a sheer loss to the men whose money built the roads. These steals were made, for the most part, in violation of no statutory or common law, and, on the other hand, were often aided by the strong arm of the law; but not a single dollar was stolen which was not in violation of this parable of our Saviour.

Of course, in these cases, there was no taking hold of throats and casting into prison; that kind of work is not the fashion, but in the end the result was the same—the men were put in a helpless condition and their money forced from them, in violation of righteousness and fair dealing.

The common people seeing their inability to compete with the great centers of money, a number of small dealers, day laborers, mechanics and farmers bring their savings of a lifetime and invest them in a company, hoping to have something from it in old age and to bequeath to their children. The scheme is to set on foot, some promising enterprise, or to open some archive of nature where the key can only be turned by large capital, and so must remain closed against all except the wealthy, unless such companies are formed. The money from people of this class carries along the enterprise till its success is assured, and the days of speculation are gone. Then the management, in conjunction with capital, get up some trouble. The real merits of the property are kept in the dark, and it is actually put

under disgrace. The stockholders become discouraged with their property and alarmed at the conduct of their management. A debt is incurred. The debt is a small fraction of what the property is actually worth, but in time it forces the property to sale under the sheriff's hammer. The stockholders cannot, and are not disposed to, bid against the owner of the claim to save their property, and the property is sold for the claim. Or, to put it in other words, the stockholders get mad and discouraged with the management of their company, begin scolding and work themselves up into a scare that it is all going to be lost anyway, when they ought to get down to cool business, go to the bottom of facts, and let all the sinners in the management know that "the way of transgressors is hard."\* Then is the time when a little true courage is needed, but it is astonishing how meekly the tens of thousands in our land permit themselves to be robbed in this way, and then quietly submit, as if they were to blame and it were a disgrace to have invested money in a corporation where any men in it afterwards turned out to be rascals. The great majority of men who have been successful, by close economy, in getting some money ahead, if the truth were known, have made such investments, and, almost without an exception, have lost their hard-earned and careful savings in the venture. This conduct has made it one of the easiest things to steal the property of a corporation. The devil

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\* Prov. xiii., 15.

has planned it somehow so that it is a downhill road so easy that if the management, or a part of the management, take a notion to steal a company's property, they can do it, and it is almost worth the life of any one of the management to try to expose the plot or break up the plan. When there is trouble in a company, one of the hardest things to do is to keep the stockholders from throwing down their holdings and thus playing into the hands of their robbers, and putting themselves in a position where they will be at least in part to blame for their loss; and the designing wreckers of the company will comfort themselves that it was all the fault of the timid and selfish stockholders, and that they had to take the property off their hands, when the whole thing was a planned steal.

Against this kind of robbery our civil courts afford no protection. The court takes into consideration that the rich man has an indisputable claim in dollars and cents against this property, and in the sale, under the court's order, it brought only enough to satisfy this claim. It was a cold, calculated steal, planned by the management in conjunction with capital, from the beginning, that it was against stockholders who had trusted their money in the hands of this management, which in fact made it more than robbery; in the addition of outraged confidence, is all a question which every man in the court may know, but for reason of some technicality of law, cannot be made part of the case, and so has little or no influence in the

decision. It is one thing to know that you have a rascal in the court room, and another to have him convicted of his crime.

The president of a company being very frequently the richest man in the company, courts have looked with suspicion on his having claims against his company and bringing them into court to collect. Judges who have been willing to go beyond what was written in law, to do justice, have rendered decisions against such presidents, knowing how they came by their claim; but one or two caught, and these foxes do not go in that beaten path for their game any longer. When they want their claim collected by the court, they ask it by making a pseudo-transfer of the claim to another man. But if this were known in the court to be a substitution for the sake of evading the law, would it not be set aside as fraud? It would have to be proven so, and established by substantial evidence; but, on the other hand, such a president would swear that he made an actual and *bona-fide* transfer of the property to this man, and the man had already sworn in his petition to the court that he purchased it and owned it. So things must go on unchecked, although everyone knows in his heart that it is actual robbery, and under the cover of the law. Man's law is defective and deals only with the externals, but God's law deals with the secrets of the heart, and there never was a rascal who escaped the condemnation of divine law.

If the property which is stolen effects the interests



and convenience of the public, as a railroad, the people, regardless of this injustice, shower their commendations of praise on the new company, for getting the road out of the hands of the old management, though the new be the same old management, with the small stockholders, whose money built the road, left out. So this wrecking of railroads and other corporations has been systematically carried on in this land of churches and courts of justice, by men occupying the highest places in our land and nation, and also esteemed in the Church of God.

It is true that human law has been reaching up towards the divine law. There has been more struggling by the bench of our circuit and supreme courts, as recorded decisions show, than the common sentiment is aware of. Yet, in all our great struggles between capital and labor, there has been a clear and unbroken line of decisions in the protection of property, and that property has been, without exception, in the hands of the plutocrat, pitted against men who were fighting for the image which God placed upon them; fighting in defence of their homes and their firesides, their wives and their families; in a word, all that was dear to them was in the balance against needless thousands in the plutocrat's hands; but money outweighed the souls of men in the eyes of the court.

Human laws have been softened wonderfully by the influence of Christianity. Men are no longer

sold for debt. The pound of flesh can no longer be exacted. The tortures of pulling men's noses, twisting their thumbs out of joint and skinning them alive for debt, have all passed away before the influence of Jesus' teachings. But in all ages, the cruelty of the money-lender has been limited only by the command of the common people, saying, Thus far shalt thy proud oppression come, and no farther. There is no power so void of all feeling as the reign of money. Money is made by selfishness. It is the scepter of the selfish man's ambition. It is a scepter without reason or regard to justice. It is the scepter a small-brained man with a shriveled heart can wield, and the only one that he can successfully. Great fortunes are not made by superior merit and ability, but by superior grabbing and robbing the weak and poor of their God-appointed rights. The credit which we give the industrious citizen over the lazy sluggard, the sober, economical man over the spendthrift and drunkard, is that of a good citizen over a poor one. But these relations do not hold between the rich and the poor, or common people. The wealthy are rich from their intense selfishness, and our poor are often poor because they are shut out of work by the rich taking the opportunities from them, and their poverty or idleness is enforced, and not their choice nor their fault. Great wealth is heartless, oppressive, and, by the co-relation of forces, where a few have great wealth, the many have severe poverty. For the very reason that some have it, others do not

have it. The palace of the millionaire is flanked by glutted almshouses and over-crowded jails.

If a common man puts his money into a company, so as to be able to compete with the wealthy and other strong firms, as a rule, the management conspires to steal it away from him, and usually succeeds. The other chance he has for his small holdings is to attempt to stem the tide of business alone, and in case he does, sooner or later, the rising tide of fierce competition will sweep him down.

The mortgage a man put on his farm fifteen years ago, that was not worth half as much as the farm, has gathered strength, till, to-day, it covers over the entire farm, while every cent of the interest has been promptly paid. The farmer has worked hard all these fifteen years, and has only been able to make enough to give his family a plain living and pay the interest. Were the farm sold to-day, which it would surely be, in case of the man's death, it would not bring more than enough to pay the original mortgage. The farmer's investment, which was one-half the value of the farm, is swept entirely away from him; while the equal investment of the money-lender has paid him, in this time, more, in the aggregate, in interest, than his entire investment, and the original investment has doubled its value, counting value in land and the products of life and everything which forms the bases of the common people's interests financially. The total debt of the country is increasing much faster than the wealth of the country. Farms by

the tens of thousands are sinking under mortgages for the same reason that Israel groaned in the days of Amos, viz., "making the ephah small and the shekel great, that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat."\*

What good does it do the farmer to learn that English capitalists and Wall street are ringing the changes on good money and sound money, when the money has become so good that the mortgage on his farm has doubled its hold and power, when the money is so sound it takes double the amount of the product of his farm to purchase it that it did ten or fifteen years ago? It is a good thing for the plutocrats in England and this country who hold our securities, to see that their money has doubled its power over the property on which they have their grip; but it is an entirely different thing when this appreciation of money threatens to cost a man his farm, his home, and reduce him to the level of a serf. There threatens to be more evictions from farms in our country, and more heartless ones, than all the far-famed evictions of Ireland. Do we not appear to be approaching the condition of Israel, when all that the poor have will be bought with demonetized silver, and the poor themselves will be bought, in the strong language of the Hebrew prophet, for a pair of shoes?

Then there is an additional light which must view this subject, and I desire to approach it with great

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\*Amos viii., 5, 6.

care, lest my intentions be misunderstood. Men ought to pay their debts. The command of the apostle is, "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another."\* This is our marching order, and certainly good legal advice. It is also very wrong to steal. The eighth commandment is, "Thou shalt not steal."† Nevertheless, God abrogated this great law in the relation of the Hebrew slaves and their Egyptian masters. When the children of Israel were about to go free from their Egyptian bondage, it is recorded, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians."‡

These Egyptian masters had robbed the Hebrew slaves of their opportunities in life, and of their hard service all their days, and of their fathers before them, and it was a little thing if they took away with them some of the gold, and silver, and raiment, which was, by the title of fairness between man and man, coming to them. The same principle was recognized in the days of our African slaves stealing chickens and turkeys. It was a subject for jests both North and South, and was not looked upon as criminal, as it would have been in a man who was not a slave.

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\* Rom. xiii., 8. † Ex. xx., 15. ‡ Ex. xi., 2, and iii., 22.

Jesus up at Nazareth took the text of His first sermon from the prophecy of Isaiah, where it is said of Him that He would come "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." \* And when He had closed the book, He began to say unto them : "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." † The acceptable year of the Lord was the year of jubilee. The year of jubilee came every fiftieth year, and in this year all debts were remitted, all Hebrew slaves were released and liberated, all lands which had been taken for debt were restored to the families to which they had been at first allotted by divine direction, because God said it was His land and for all His people. The law reads : "In the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof : it shall be a jubilee unto you ; and ye shall return every man unto his possessions, and ye shall return every man unto his family. If thou sell aught unto thy neighbour, or buyest aught of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another ; but thou shalt fear thy God : for I am the Lord your God. The land shall not be sold forever : for the land is mine ; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." ‡

The principle is clearly set forth here that the land and the productive powers of nature belong to God, that He holds them for all His people alike,

\* Is. lxi., 2. † Luke iv., 21. ‡ Lev. xxv., 9, 10, 14, 17, 23.

and does not allow any man or class of men to monopolize these by any superior title which they may claim to have acquired over the poor and perhaps weaker men. The law is a great and effectual check, if enforced, against the greediness of wealth and power. Had it been obeyed, Israel never could have fallen into the power of the plutocrats; intelligence would have been general among the masses, the moral sentiment and good sense of the common people would have held the nation true to God, while prosperity, peace and happiness would have reigned as nowhere else in the world.

It may be said that this sounds like repudiation. We answer, there is a high sense in which repudiation would become as essential to the nation's freedom and happiness, as it has been to rise up and throw off the yoke of the despot, and break the chains from the slave which his master had unrighteously bound about him. The great question our generation has to solve, if it would be true to the task assigned it by Almighty God, is that there is a limit to the right of title, and if any man goes beyond that limit, he is a robber of his fellow-man, and the prince of sinners.



## CHAPTER IX.

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### THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

**T**HERE is nothing written that excels or equals in love the discourse of our Saviour, where He tells the disciples of the Holy Ghost, which proceedeth from the Father, and whom He would send to them after He was gone. He rose even above all His former addresses; it seemed as if the deepest fountains of love had been broken up and flowed out in full tide of heavenly affection, with the announcement of the sending of the Holy Spirit to the world.

Jesus Christ is love revealed through human flesh. John tells us that "God is love,"\* but he had no need to write that the Holy Spirit is love; for it is love, the essence of love, and nothing else. While God revealed Himself as the loving Jehovah, He also revealed Himself as the God of battles, as the righteous God, in sending a flood to drown the wicked inhabitants from off the face of the earth, and appeared unto Moses amid the crashing thunder, the fire and smoke, on Mount Sinai. Jesus Christ came to us in the weakness of human flesh, and in His heroic, noble battles for truth and

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\* 1 John iv., 8.

the down-trodden, it is altogether possible that men might take offense against both Him and the Father, through ignorance and misunderstanding. But with the Holy Spirit there are no such attendants; the Holy Spirit is love, love alone. It reveals itself to men neither through matter nor material force, intelligence nor intellectual strength, but is simply love for men, and is God. Men cannot sin against the Holy Spirit unless they sin against love, love to God and love for their fellow-men.

The sins which are the result of ignorance, or any weakness of humanity or the human flesh, cease when the soul is released from the body. The exciting causes die with the flesh, and so are pardonable, and men committing them may have their souls washed from the stains of the sin of the flesh and be forever clean and pure in heaven. They are not sins which the Scriptures call sins unto death. John writes: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."\* Here John clearly divides sins into two classes. The one class is pardonable and the other is not. There is such a thing as being overtaken in a fault, but they who are spiritual are commanded to restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering themselves, lest they also be tempted. These sins

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\* 1 John v., 16, 17.

of the flesh are common to all men, and are pardonable, for they come from the weakness of our frail human nature.

But there is the sin of selfishness, which is not a sin of the flesh. It is a sin of the soul, which commands the flesh and brings it into subjection, and the flesh is subjected not willingly, but by reason of that which subjected the same. Selfishness is not a blunder, nor a stumbling, nor a weakness, nor from heated passion, nor the result of an over-excited appetite, but is the cool design and deliberate, determined course of the heart and mind, or soul of the man. All the actions of selfishness are in direct antagonism to love, so it is utterly impossible for a man to be under the control of love, and at the same time to be selfish. John very logically goes on writing that which he holds as a self-evident fact, when he says: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not."\* God is love, and all His dealings with men are in love, and he that is born of God is love, like unto his Father, and cannot be selfish, for whosoever is born of God sinneth not. Selfishness is of the devil. Selfishness is devil nature. Men who are selfish, Jesus Christ told us, are the children of the devil. A man cannot be born of two fathers, neither can he be of two natures, and especially so when these are diametrically opposite and destructive the one of the other.

There is no use in praying for a devil; he cannot repent, and would not. But you might just as well

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\* 1 John v., 18.

pray for a devil as for a thoroughly selfish man. And John says to us, "I do not say that you shall pray for it." Emphasizing the same thought, John says: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar."\* The word brother is not used here in the sense of being a member of the same church, but brother in human flesh. The hating here spoken of is not being mad at somebody on account of some irritating thing which has come between two or more, but it is in the wide sense of an absolute want of brotherly love which, in its workings and effect, is a hating of our fellow-men. John, going on, makes his own commentary on this passage, and says: "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."† "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."‡ John, the son of thunder, and at the same time the most loving of all the apostles, rises to the climax of his charge against these selfish sinning men, when he wrote: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."§

On one occasion, when Jesus was at dinner with His disciples, the common people came in and sat down with Him and His disciples. "And when

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\* 1 John iv., 20. † 1 John iv., 20, 21. ‡ 1 John iii., 14. § 1 John iii., 15.

the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”\* There was an entire want of love in the Pharisees for their brethren, and the want left no vacuum, but their hearts were filled with contempt, jealousy and hatred against them. They thought the world was made especially for themselves, and while they had far over what was their fair portion, they were not contented, but begrudged the poor any favors that might fall to them, and hated and classed them as on a lower plane of society. “They trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.”† But Jesus told them, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

Self-righteousness is the sure child of pride, and pride is the certain offspring of selfishness. It would have been a fruitless mission for Jesus to have come to this world to call these kind of men. He might as well have gone to hell to convert devils.

Brotherly love is the test which Jesus gave of his Messiahship. When great John the Baptist lay confined in his lonely dungeon in the prison of the gloomy castle of Fort Machærus, the great heart,

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\*Math. ix., 11-13. † Luke xviii., 9.

sinking by physical lassitude and from despair of life, had no hope but in Jesus. Yet he saw no fan in Jesus' hand, nor flame burning up the unquenchable fire, nor axe being laid at the root of the tree, as he, prompted by divine inspiration, had announced Jesus as coming to the world; so he sent messengers to Jesus, saying, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"\* Jesus did not answer the question directly, but said to them, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."† Here we find Jesus calling attention to the fact that the evidence of His divinity to men is in pure, unselfish love, exercising itself toward all who are oppressed either with poverty or any manner of disease or sickness, all of which are the work of the devil.

John knew God in His power of justice, in de-throning wickedness in high places, but he failed to see the Messiah in Jesus through His unpretending works of mercy and love to all men. But Jesus knew as soon as John's attention was called to the fact, the great heart would grasp the divine truth; so He simply told the messengers to call John's attention to Jesus' acts of love and mercy, so unselfishly and indiscriminately bestowed. Then, Jesus apparently fearing that His conduct might cast a

\* Math. xi., 3. † Math. xi., 4-6.

reflection on John the Baptist, added: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." \*

John was excelled by none, mighty in eloquence, mighty in power to command men, terrible to sinners in his convictions of righteousness, sweeping in his condemnation against the guilty, mighty in his heroism for truth, and faithful even unto death in its cause; but the strong nature failed to see God in love alone. And Jesus said that whosoever should see divinity in perfect love exercised through disinterested benevolence was greater than John the Baptist. Not even righteousness, nor justice, nor hope, nor trust in God, nor talents, nor power—nothing alone is the clear image of God, but love. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." †

And where John was wanting, the world has been much more wanting in all ages. The founders of all other religions, even the elders of the Jewish temple, never conceived the mystical love which was the essence of all Jesus did and said, and which Paul beautifully calls charity. For this reason, when "Jesus came unto his own, his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." ‡ No act prompted by selfishness can have any merit in the sight of God. A man may preach

\*Math. xi., 11. † 1 Cor. xiii., 13. ‡ John i., 11, 12.



and pray, make temperance speeches, lead a moral life as pure as a Pharisee, build churches, bestow his goods to feed the poor, and give his body to be burned, yet if it is done without this love, it is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. But any act done for love's sake, though it be only "The giving to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."\*

It is said, on a certain occasion Jesus met a man who was so possessed of a devil that he was both blind and dumb, and Jesus healed him, insomuch that the blind and the dumb both saw and spake. And the people were all amazed, and said, "Is not this the son of David?" † The people were astonished at the power of the wonderful work which had been performed, and felt to some degree the celestial, magic, mystical love which prompted the act. But the Pharisees, on the other hand, blind in their selfishness, were dead to all true love for their fellow-men. They saw nothing God-like in it. It struck their selfish nature unkindly, and was an offense, from the unobserved reason that it was a reproof to their lives, and they began their usual abuse of Jesus, saying: "This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." ‡

This conduct of the Pharisees was the occasion of the remarkable utterance of our Saviour when He said: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner

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\* Math. x., 42. † Math. xii., 22, 23. ‡ Math. xii., 24.

of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men : but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him : but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good ; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt : for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things ? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” \*

These Pharisees were the wealthy men or monopolists of Palestine, and at the same time the rulers of the Jewish Church. They counted their formal service to the temple religion, but they had no love for humanity at large, which was their sin. They grabbed the productive powers of Palestine, gloried in their wealth, thought it made them better than the poor ; they had no sympathy for the poor, and not even the healing of a poor, possessed demoniac, whose eyes were opened and ears unstopped, could awaken a chord of sympathy or demand a respect for Jesus. They were dead in selfishness, and so had sinned against the Holy Ghost.

Mark puts it, “ But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation ; because they said, he hath an unclean spirit.” \* Men whose

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\* Math. xii., 31-35. † Mark iii., 29-30.

lives are a menace to freedom and a blight to the happiness and prosperity of the masses, have sinned against the Holy Ghost, for if they had not so sinned, they could not be so unmindful of the rights of others, and be so greedy to become wealthy and hold the productive powers of nature from the masses, in their hands. Such men, especially if reproved, will sneer at the work of trying to lift up the poor and needy as foolish, and if it commands a popular influence, will denounce it as the work of a devil. And here was the evidence to Mark and the Saviour that these men had sinned against the Holy Ghost.

Jesus says, "By their fruits ye shall know them. A good tree will bring forth good fruit, and an evil tree will bring forth evil fruit." It mattered not to Jesus what a man's profession was, or what his standing was estimated to be by his fellow-men; the question was whether his life was a blessing to mankind, or whether the effect of it was evil. If the man was actuated in his life by the motive of love to and for the good of his fellow-men, the fruits of his life would unquestionably be good and the happiness of humanity would be larger by his living in the world; but if he was controlled in his life by selfishness, the effects of his life would be hurtful, and the general happiness of men would be less from his being in the world. He closed with his characteristic epithet for the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, saying, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?"

for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”\* Their lips could not help reflecting their selfishness and their want of all love to men. Their sins never can be forgiven in this world, neither in the world to come, for their sinning shows that the entire tissue of their souls is corrupt, that the fibers of brotherly love have been eaten away by the cancer of selfishness, and this cancer forms the centre of the nerve action of their entire spirits and souls; so it would be impossible for them to speak good things.

Paul, in writing to the wealthy Hebrews, exhorts them to lay aside, in a manner, the principles of the doctrines of Christ, and to go on to perfection, that is, to the fullness of the gospel; or, in other words, to lay aside the doctrines of baptism, and of the laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment. There is something of vastly more importance to a world of men who are sinking in sin and under the hard yoke of oppression, than the methods of church worship, the mode of baptism, or the statements of Polemic theology. These have their place, but that place is secondary; they must always be held in subordination, and there must be a going on to the great principle of Jesus Christ, which is brotherly love to all men, with its fountain-head from God the Father. Paul’s warnings are fearful to them who heed not his exhortation: “For as touching those who were once enlightened,” he

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\* Math. xii., 34.

says, "and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."\* It is a very easy thing for a wealthy, selfish plutocrat to be a zealous sectarian and substitute zeal for his denomination, instead of religion, while he is sinking his soul in selfishness, led on by the ambition for wealth and power. So Paul says, Let go your Church doctrines for a little while, so that brotherly love may have free course, and a great many of you wealthy men will see that you are not in harmony with Jesus Christ at all. He warns them of the danger of their condition of hopelessly falling away, where there would be neither hope nor possibility of pardon; seeing they have crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to open shame.

James says: "Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called?" † To oppress the poor is to crucify Jesus Christ afresh, and to put Him to an open shame. "Superfluity on the one hand, and dire want on the other—the millionaire and the tramp—are the complements each of the other." ‡ The grasping and the holding of wealth thwarts the sacrifice of the Saviour, and is in the same spirit of the men

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\* Heb. vi., 1-6. (R. V.) † James ii., 6, 7. ‡ Josiah Strong.

who nailed Him to the cross eighteen hundred years ago. It puts Jesus to open shame, that His life of love and sacrifice should be so ignored and frustrated, and that by men who wear His name and profess to follow in His footsteps.

The Saviour warned men of this great danger of riches in His parable of the sower, saying: "He that receiveth seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."\* Paul wrote to Timothy, saying: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."† There seems to be one thing which can make an exception to the grand old doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, and that is selfishness fired and fed by increasing money, wealth and power. This, perhaps, and this alone, can make a man who was once in grace to be in grace no longer. This formed the only exception to the Saviour's whosoever will, when He told the Pharisees that He came not to call the righteous. There seems to be no other sin but selfishness, in which a man can go so far that the grace of God cannot follow after him, and where sin abounds there make grace to more abound. Away

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\* Math. xiii., 22. † 1 Tim. vi., 9, 10.

down in the dark swamps of iniquity, from the deepest mire of moral corruption, the servants of God gather many of the brightest diamonds to bedeck the Saviour's brow.

The love of gold and gain, indulged and stimulated by large success, eats up all the nobler nature of a man, while it leaves an outward profession of Christianity standing around a heart which is totally depraved. Such were the whited sepulchers, with their spotless, pure, outward character, beautiful as polished marble; while within there was rottenness of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. Human flesh is the finest of all the animal kingdom, and in proportion its decaying stench is the most offensive. In like manner, there is nothing equal in vileness and sinfulness to the dead and decaying spiritual graces in man.

These whited sepulchers will talk of redeeming grace from memory and of religious experiences so essentially true to life, that they not only deceive themselves, but they deceive the elect. To hear them talk is to know that their hearts must have been "touched with a live coal from off the altar of God."\* Of these men the Saviour said, "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."† The Saviour says that these men will go up to the judgment bar of God, saying: "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy

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\*Is. vi., 6-7. †Math. xv., 7-8.



\*name have cast out devils, and in thy name done wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”\* The world must learn the lesson, that not every one who saith, “Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”† The world is advancing along this line, and every year making less of profession and measuring men more by what they really are. It is not what a man once was, or how piously and smoothly he may talk about his goodness and honesty, but how nearly his life is conformed to and patterned after the man Christ Jesus, or, in other words, all that is pure, honest and generous. Men who are epistles of the gospel, read and known of all men, are what the world must have.

Adam and Eve once were pure and holy, but they fell. Their fall was caused by selfishness, and in so doing, threw their natures out of harmony with the great law of heaven—love, brotherly love. If the first pair of the human race, created perfect in holiness, sinned and fell away from that divine life, need we think it any incredible thing that the same power should make men who were once children of God by regeneration, to fall away from God and purity, holiness and happiness?

The devils were once perfectly holy and lived with divine life in heaven and walked in the very presence of God Himself. But, through the power

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\*Math. vii., 22, 23. † Math. vii., 21.

of selfishness, they fell; fell beyond the reach of redemption and hope of pardon, or ever regaining those blissful seats. So man, who has been redeemed from the power of reigning sin, may fall away; but if he does, his fall will be like Lucifer's, never to be regained nor to retrace his steps. He has sinned willfully. His sin has been not by weak, blundering humanity, but by the choice of the soul, choosing death rather than life, selfishness rather than love.

The sin of the Holy Ghost is not a single act. It is no mysterious something which a man may stumble upon as an accident of his life. But it is a state, a condition of nature, a habit of life, chosen deliberately, calmly and determinately. It is a soul given over to and dominated by selfishness and dead to brotherly love.

## CHAPTER X.

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### THE SENSE OF OWNERSHIP.

**W**HAT is man? And what is life to man? Is it merely to exist, to breathe, to eat and to drink? If this be true, then man is nothing more than a brute. The brute is an animal, and that is his all. Man is not only an animal of the highest order, but in his organization God placed His own image. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."\* The image which God placed upon man of Himself was the supremacy of the will of man over the creature, animate and inanimate. In the ownership and control of property, man experiences a sense of divinity.

Man is a trinity. He feels, he thinks, he wills, these three; but the greatest of these is will. The brute feels, and has a low form of thought; but his will must be subjected to man's will to fill his des-

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\* Gen. i., 26, 27.

tinued end in life. Jesus, when on earth, recognized this image of God in man, this sovereignty of the will. Only in one condition did Jesus ever appear to confess impotency. But it was not that He had abdicated His omnipotence or the almighty power of God within Him. It was the condition which confronted Him. It was when He stood before the will and choice of men, that He said: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"\* Jesus Christ announced His truth drawn from none of the school of philosophy. He compounded with none. He stood independent of all the rulers of the earth. He announced His great truth, "Yea, yea, and nay, nay." But whether men would do as He commanded, was in the domain of the empire of their wills, into which He would not enter, save by the moral sense of right and wrong appealing to their election and choice. Though He was God in flesh and His whole being opposed and contravened sin in all its forms, He would assume no arbitrary control over the wills of men, even to defeat it. For Him to have done so would have been to impeach the image and sway conferred on man at his creation.

We saw, in the preceding chapter, that men who sinned against the Holy Ghost did it by a calm, deliberate choice of the will; that it was not a sin of the feelings, the appetite, the passions, neither

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\* Math. xxiii., 37.

compelled by environment. The will is the rudder which guides the man in his course, and in its control the soul is the indisputed, absolute dictator. Where the will is for sin and selfishness, the whole being of the man is moving from God towards Satan; pride is the breeze which swells his sails, and eternal sin is the harbor in view. All other sins men commit under some degree of protest or other, save selfishness. The drunkard knows he is doing wrong, and the harlot feels she is an outcast. But the selfish man, gaining wealth, rejoiceth in his iniquity, and as he gains, feels he is becoming more and more a god, though it be like the god of this world. The will is the spirit of the image of God in man. When this is perverted, the conscience is silenced. They "sin willfully," as Paul says, and "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."\*

The battles for liberty and self-government have been fought for the individual sovereignty of the will and the right of the individual ownership of property. Take away a man's liberty of self-government and his right to the ownership of property, and you have gone a long way in defacing the image which God placed upon him. As man is finite, so this sovereignty has its limit in meets and bounds. It is a great blessing to have a good stomach and the means to supply it with good and

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\* Heb. x., 26, 27.

proper food. In being so and doing so is happiness, joy, pleasure and length of days. But when its proper limits are passed, there are gluttony, misery, disgrace, and the wicked shall not live out half their days. So Adam and Eve, in reaching forth for more than was meat, instead of enlarging their dominion, surrendered it to Satan, in a great measure, both for themselves and their posterity. The great struggle of God with the human race ever since has been to regain that which was lost in Eden and restore the world to God, to whom it rightfully belongs, for the use of His children for whom He built it. When the great battle between right and wrong, righteousness and sin, between selfishness and brotherly love shall have been fought in the world (and I doubt not for the universe), the hosts of sin o'erthrown, God will announce to His angels to take down the framework of the world, and the "angel standing upon the sea and upon the earth with uplifted hand to heaven shall swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there shall be time no longer."\*

"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein,"† for He made them. God created the world out of nothing, so He is the rightful owner and governor of it. It is sorrowful to think that, after God had made the

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\* Rev. x., 6. † Ps. xxiv., 1.

world, Satan should wrest it from His grasp, and that when God created man and proposed to honor him with being the agent to redeem the world from Satan's grasp, the very first pair should put themselves under the dominion and control of Satan, and that during the long six thousand years of the race, God should wait and work, trying to persuade man to throw off the yoke of Satan and turn to freedom and happiness; but man would not. "All day long," said God, "I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."\* "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof."† The world is under the agonies of sin to-day, because men will not rise up and throw off the power of Satan's thralldom, and God cannot compel them to do it and leave them to act under the direction of their wills, until He shall triumph by the almighty power of truth taking hold of the hearts of men. God's ownership and control of the earth was usurped by Satan in the beginning, is held now by his deceit and the assistance of his aides-de-camp, who are strong, selfish men, following the example of their father.

Jesus repeatedly announced that His errand to the world was to break the hold Satan has on the earth, through the redemption of the human race. Hear Him announcing, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast

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\* Rom. x., 21. † Prov. i., 24, 25.



out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."\* "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me,"† "because the prince of this world is judged."‡ People sometimes wonder why Jesus allows so many sorrows, heart-aches, sicknesses, deaths and disappointments to come to men. Jesus does not let a single sorrow or pain touch a human heart, that it is possible for Him to help, and leave man as a free agent. There is no man who would not rebel at the thought of God taking away his free agency and reducing him to a machine, directed by dead fatality—by the compulsion of God's arbitrary command. Paul calls Satan the "god of this world," because men will chose to follow him more than God, and from the devil originally come all the trials of men.

Men work hard amidst all this great abundance, and often get nothing but the plainest living, and every stroke of their labor is oftentimes little above a slave, under the eye and dictation of a cruel task-master or boss. They are worked like machines, and the larger part of the fruits of their toil goes to fill the coffers of other men. While this state of things remains, we may expect discontent, and that discontent will increase as intelligence increases among the masses. It is the leaven of righteousness working in the lump, and it will never cease agitating the hearts of men till the whole lump is leavened. The fires of divine truth are lighted by the breath of Jesus Christ, and He will see to it that they do

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\*John xii., 31-32. †John xiv., 30. ‡John xvi, 11.

not go out until the world is redeemed. God the Father is discontented with such a condition of things. Jesus is seeing the travail of His soul and is not satisfied, but that satisfaction will ere long come in the salvation of His people. The sin of the strong man against the poor, taking the effects and results of their labors, and depriving them of ruling over themselves, is exactly the same as Satan taking the world away from God, who made it. The sins are not only alike, but they are one and the same. To rob God is to rob men; to rob men is to rob Jesus Christ. No wonder that Jesus called the poor His brethren. They are brethren in the strongest ties—the ties of suffering and enduring wrongs. God has prepared the nations of the earth so that they are knit together, and Jesus is stirring the hearts of the people as never before. It is not visionary to prophesy that we are in the beginning of the great strife which will lead on to the universal battle, when the hosts of the Lord shall gather for battle at Armageddon, the mountain of the gospel, as spoken of by John in The Revelation. What foolishness it is for men to stay under the thralldom of Satan's oppression! Why should the masses be wronged any longer, merely to let a few wealthy men indulge their greed and pride? "Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?"\*

It is the work of the devil which hides from the eyes of men the wonderful good things God has

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\*James ii., 7.

stored away in the earth for His people. And where men have listened to the voice of God from His Word, the abundance of the storehouse of nature has always begun to flow out. To the light of Christian civilization we are indebted for all our great improvements and developments of nature over the aboriginals of this country, or our ancestors in Europe a thousand years ago. The shrill whistle of the locomotive has not been heard where the name of Jesus has not gone before, and the clicking of telegraphy is not known beyond the ken of His truth. Where Satan is foiled in keeping men in heathen darkness and ignorance, and the minds of the people, illuminated and stimulated by Christian civilization, discover nature's treasures and wake up her sleeping forces, Satan bids monopolists grasp them as speedily as possible from the reach of the common people, and the more rapidly the enlightened mind brings forth the unknown productive powers of nature, the more speedily mighty corporations and wealthy men come into existence, and the more effectually Satan's work is done in robbing the common people. To make the earth "bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater,"\* and to awaken the sleeping forces of nature, is defeating Satan's meanness against men. It is man in the image of God carrying on God's designs in His work of creation and restoring nature to the kind purpose for which God intended it and made it.

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\* Is. lv., 10.

It was this noble spirit which fired the hearts of our forefathers to endure privations and hardships in felling the forests of this country; and they did it with a hearty good-will and zest, for they had respect unto the recompense of the reward that the succeeding generations should enjoy larger opportunities than they themselves had, or any nation ever possessed. They did it, not that bulls and bears might have a hellish spree, piling up great fortunes at the expense of the sorrows and rights of the many. But as God's kind intentions toward men were greatly frustrated by Satan, so our forefathers' kind intentions toward their succeeding generations are being greatly frustrated by the agents of Satan doing his work and following his example, and in the spirit of their master. As soon as nature's storehouse is unlocked and begins to pour out its abundance, they grasp it and tie it up in some great monopoly to make millions with, while the poor man would gladly eat of the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table.

Although nature's storehouses were not opened up as they are now, before the days of the plutocrats, if a man were poor, it was because of some severe misfortune, shiftlessness or drunkenness. Enforced idleness was unknown. But now, tens of thousands of men are out of work, who are industrious and would gladly work if they could find it; but the rich have seized and are holding the opportunities of life and the pursuit of happiness from the many—the door is shut against them.

Kind Providence evidently intended that the wakening up of the sleeping powers of nature—coal, steam, electricity and machinery—should roll back the curse on man at his fall, viz., “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground.”\* It is God’s intention that man should rise in the dignity of his image of God, and command not only the animate, but the inanimate nature, by the word of his mouth, and it should obey him and do his service; that man should work fewer hours and have more time for social, moral and intellectual improvement and development. The world should be made so that men could live in obedience to the high command: “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?”† These words were spoken in sharp contrast with, and immediately following, the statement that “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” It was not intended that the strength of a man’s energies should be given to making enough to feed his stomach and clothe his body. “Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment?” The development of men—socially, morally, mentally, physically and spiritually—is vastly higher and

\* Gen. iii., 19. † Math. vi., 25, 26.

more the business of intelligent and immortal men than even this wonderful increase of material prosperity.

With all our improvements, developments, inventions and discoveries, it is harder for a young man with a limited capital to get started for an independent life than it was ten years ago. It is harder for the small dealer, the little manufacturer and the farmer to keep on their feet than it was ten years ago, and the outlook is that it will continue to grow worse and worse.

But untie these forces of nature from the hold of wealth, so they can flow out to the masses, and men need not work over half a day to have far more than they have now. When the demon of selfishness is cast out of men, they will stop when they have enough. They will work only part of the time, yet wear as many clothes as they do now, eat as much, and in general consume as much. This will leave room for all the men now idle to find employment; and when employed, these men will get more clothes and buy more of everything, and the over-supply will thus be taken up.

It is the greediness of the strong grasping the opportunities of the productive powers of nature from the weak, which compels the common people to strive and toil without rest, fearing the day will soon come when they too will be without work and the necessities of life. If the comforts of life were within easy reach of all, the possession of them would lose the character of being an evidence of

god-like power in him who held a superfluity of them. They would be more like air and water, and men would strive for no more than enough to supply their natural wants. There would not be that temptation to selfishness in the young, who are strong, to develop themselves into plutocrats, nor, on the other hand, would the weak be compelled to sink down in the struggle for life and become vagabonds. Think calmly what hellish work it is for men to speculate merely for the sake of making themselves feel like little gods, in that which the great, kind Jehovah designed for the happiness of His people, and deface God's image which He has placed upon men. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."\* Men should be estimated by what they are, by what they do to make the world better and happier in the circle of influence opened before them, and not by their wealth; but men never will be thus rightfully estimated while money is the reigning power of the land.

As the light of Christianity opened up the great powers of nature, and God's people began to enjoy themselves in this age as men never did before, Satan organized his forces to grab and tie up these loosed powers of nature, by mighty and strong men in great estates and monopolies, with more hellish energy than he has ever exhibited since the days Jesus Christ was upon the earth.

A man's greatest happiness in life is found when

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\*Luke xii., 15.



employed and at work. The children play work because they love it, and grown people are children only with more years left behind them. The zest of gaining and holding property enlarges a man's nature and causes him to grow in the image of God. Life is good, and in the acquisition of property men live more. It is the tangible expression of their wills. When gained by honest service, economy and generous management, with all men it is the heritage which God has given man, and the empire of His dominion in the world. In the pleasure which clusters around these is the zest of life, and it stimulates the development of the nobler elements of true manhood. It unites families in little commonwealths, and shuts strong doors against discontent and family feuds. It is a band of strength uniting the husband and wife, and a cord to hold the children to the parents. It marks the lines of family ties, and in every way makes a man a better citizen.

Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home. A pleasant home, a happy wife, will wean a man away from vice as no other earthly power can do. Men at their work are only runaways from women, and to the true man, his wife is the queen of the world, while the home which he has provided is her throne. To supply this revenue is the delight of his life; and when in it, he feels, as nowhere else, the true power of the image God has placed in him, living and holding sway.

Put before every man this hope of home and

competency and independence in gaining a livelihood, and two generations will not pass till selfishness, improvidence and drunkenness will flee away. Poorhouses and almshouses will be a thing of the past. These will then be looked upon as things necessary for half-civilized people, but things which will not be needed when full civilization dawns upon the earth, which will come when the masses are freed from the oppression of the rich.

The desire to own property is a strong instinct in man, and as man advances in civilization it strengthens and sweetens. Man does not need to be driven by necessity, as a quarry slave, to make him energetic and industrious. Give him the opportunity of developing the likeness of God which the Creator placed upon him in the beginning, and he will grow in all the noble virtues to the fullness of the stature of a man. The love of ownership is in man from his superior creation over all the other animals of the world. The world looks more beautiful to us when we own a part of it, and have dominion over it. A town-lot, with nothing on it but sand, looks beautiful to even a young girl home from the seclusion of a female seminary, if the deed is in her name.

Jesus kindly told us: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."\* If He went to heaven to prepare a mansion for us, do you not think that He desires we should have comfort-

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\* John xiv., 2.

able, bright, happy and intelligent homes on earth? In fact, He takes it for granted we could not think otherwise, for He says if such remarkable phenomena had been that there were not mansions for us on high, He would have told us. From the character of all He said and did, we must infer that in heaven, where Satan no more can annoy, Jesus will have fitted up for us beautiful, bright homes in which to dwell forever. And He says if such a strange thing should be that it were not so, He would have told us. So we must also infer it is the design of the kind Creator that we should have, from the abundance of His providence in this world, bright, beautiful homes, and the ability to make them, so our families would grow up sweet, intelligent and noble in every virtue of manhood. If such were not so, He would have told us.

Since "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,"\* it would be very strange doctrine to teach that He was not also, in His wonderful love, interested beyond finite comprehension in the happiness, comforts and abundance for men on earth.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."† True freedom opens the field in the widest and fullest sense of equality in opportunity to all men, and the accumulation of property is then a reward of merit for honest service, economy and temperance.

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\*John iii., 16. †John viii., 36.

Absolute equality is not asked for, nor expected, nor is it necessary. But equality of privileges to life and the pursuit of happiness is what we demand and must have. The intelligent, the energetic, the provident and economical, should be rewarded above the lazy, the ignorant, the drunken and the spend-thrift. But these virtues cannot and must not give license for men to tie up the productive powers of nature, to the exclusion and suffering of the many. The man who does it should not be honored as the industrious and prudent are over the sluggards and the indolent.

Where thrift becomes selfishness, economy miserliness and prudence greed, it is time to call a halt. The commendations of the former in no way apply to the latter. The honor due those who practice the first is too often given to those who act under the second, and applied with greatly enlarged intensity.

Men should be honored for the service which they render society, and condemned where their lives are evil against humanity. That man who ties up thousands and tens of thousands of dollars from the common weal of man, and then gives dimes away for charitable purposes, or, in other words, to alleviate some of the misery which his greed has caused, should not be called a philanthropist. He owes humanity all he gives, and a great deal more.

No man ever earned a million by the sweat of his face and in his service to his fellow-men. What

a man gets by the sweat of his face he holds by divine title; but all he gets that is over this he has no right to, and he has somebody else's portion, and he must give it away to be right before God.

Jesus let Peter keep his house, the centurion his home, the Syro-Phœnician woman her holdings, and it was probably in recognition of this law that He made the difference between these and the young ruler, whom He commanded to go, sell all that he had and give to the poor; and the Holy Spirit prompted Zaccheus, when converted, to give away his holdings, and the rich man was described as being in hell because he had his good things on earth.

By the increase of wealth in our country, larger and larger numbers of men are reduced to mere machines, as they work in our shops—tools in the hands of the bosses, and their wills enslaved more and more as the power of the plutocracy strengthens.

If the poor live extravagantly and use up all they get, no matter how much, it is in imitation of their masters. If some of them spend their money for that which is not bread, we ask: Do they spend as much as the rich in that way? If some of the poor are lazy and will not work and want to have a living without work, are they not trying to be like the fellow who sits in the office and manages to gather in the hard earnings of those who do work, while he does not work for one-tenth or one-hundredth dollar which he gets?

Under this pretended conservation of wealth by the rich for the poor, there is nothing but hard work and a mere living for the poor man, the farmer and the mechanic, in this land of plenty, and a place to do that is often denied him. The poor man goes home after a hard day's work, or after having hunted fruitlessly for work but finding none, his heart feeling like a stone in his bowels. The wife, half-clad, half-starved, in a half-lighted house, cold and uncomfortable, is out of heart, and consequently uncongenial. The man finds no enjoyment in home life, seeks the saloon for rest from his misery and in search of comfort. At the saloon he spends what little money he has, and goes home drunk. Things thereby are made worse, rather than better. Drinking becomes a habit and the saloon a frequent resort. The good nature of the kind wife breaks down, and her discontent turns into anger. Cold chills her, and starvation stares her in the face. Desperation takes hold of her soul, as she sees him who should provide for her and theirs not half doing it, and then giving the greater part of that little to the saloon-keeper, while leaving her to breast the cold winds of poverty alone. Her part as a wife is not performed, and her desire to her husband is no longer with her. From want of conjugal love and coldness of feelings, bad temper arises and quarrels ensue, angry blows and unfaithfulness on the part of the husband—divorce follows. The end is, the wife and daughters are driven into prostitution, and the

husband's homes are saloons and houses of ill-fame. As we look at the history, we say there were faults on both sides; but the great primeval cause of all the trouble was and is the condition of business caused by the so-called conservation of wealth by the rich.

Had there been placed before these people a hope of gaining respectability, living comfortably, a nice home, and ability to provide for themselves a competency to take care of them and shelter them in old age—in fine, the dignity of being a free man, working for himself, and no longer an employe, the sweet thought shining before them of sitting under their own vine and fig tree, with no crushing and enlarging mortgage making them afraid, they would have fought the battles of life side by side with a heart for any fate, till, in old age and full of years, they would have gone down to their graves like a shock of corn in its season, leaving good examples behind them in the memories of those who knew them and should live after them. I do not say that this would be the history of every one, but I do say that this would be the history of many a wrecked family, as things are now, and would be the development and tendency if the productive powers of nature were freed and let go to the masses.

Frances E. Willard says: "Twenty-one years of study and observation have convinced me that poverty is the prime cause of intemperance, and that misery is the mother, and hereditary appetite the



father, of the drink hallucination. For this reason I am an avowed advocate of such a change in social conditions as shall stamp out the disease and contagion of poverty, even as medical science is stamping out leprosy, small pox and cholera."

No picture at the World's Fair, in Chicago, attracted more attention than the foreclosing of the mortgage on a farm. The artist, true to life, from divine sympathy, had embodied and traced all the lines of sorrow and sadness of a crushed heart, where the fires of hope had gone out in the husband and father's face.

That one to whom the hard lot falls of having taken away an opportunity of making life comfortable and abundant, and who can rise above the distress of circumstances and live nobly and smile while fortune frowns, is made out of stuff which is more than ordinary humanity. The large army of girls and women who are thrown out of their ordained sphere in life, but are heroically stemming the current of affairs, receiving only half the pay for the same work that their stronger brothers get, suffering their double curse from being physically weaker, are they who will come up out of much tribulation, with their garments washed in the blood of the Lamb, and of which there shall be an innumerable army of white-robed saints surrounding the throne of God. That one who is robbed in this world of making the most out of life, loses and suffers only second to him who fails of reaching heaven. If he does not become a broken-hearted

man, and lie down on the race course of life, ready for temptation to crime or anything bad, he is truly a high-minded, noble man. He who destroys and takes away the opportunities from people in this life by his superior strength and position, is like to him who destroys both body and soul in hell.

## CHAPTER XI.

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### ABRAHAM AND JOB.

THE Scriptures say, "Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold."\* And because Abraham was rich, some men infer that it is right for any man to be rich, providing he gets the money without violating any statutory or common law.

Abraham had servants, and this was looked upon as an invincible argument for the divine approval of slavery in anti-bellum times. Abraham told a falsehood, and there are a few cases where this has been used as a balm for the consciences of deceitful men. Abraham had his concubine, Hagar, and this is held by some as a justification of polygamy and concubinage. Abraham turned out his concubine and his illegitimate child on the desert without sustenance and support. They would have perished had not God vouchsafed a special providence in their behalf. We have not, however, learned of any who infer from this transaction that it was the proper thing to do, or that a righteous and religious man can consistently turn out his illegitimate child

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\*Gen. xiii., 2.

and its mother to starve and die, because Abraham did.

We must take into consideration that Abraham lived in the starlight age of God's revelation to men, that Abraham was not perfect and that God winked at sins then which He commands men now to repent of and never commit. Whatever Abraham's shortcomings may have been, he towered far above all the men of his time, in the nobleness and greatness of his character, and remains till this day as the father of the faithful, and truly the most faithful man. But we must not give wholesale license for men to sin along the line of Abraham's defects and shortcomings, or of any other man's. Abraham was not perfect, and everything he did was not right, because he, being a good man, did it.

God established in Abraham the patriarchal form of government, and Abraham was not only a father to his children, but to those who were called servants. In a word, he was as a father to all his little nation or body politic. He and his people were the embryotic Jewish nation. It is true, Abraham was rich, but he used his riches not to feed his greed, nor to be clothed in purple and fine linen, and to fare sumptuously every day; his holdings and riches were for the purpose of serving others and making his little nation happy in the abundance of the land, and to deal generously with those outside with whom he came in contact.

By reading the story of his life, we find that generosity, great-heartedness, magnanimity and broth-

erly love to all men were the characteristic features of his life. This is shown in his treatment of Lot, his nephew. He had brought Lot with him from his native land to Canaan, and Lot was under at least some obligations to him. When there arose a strife between Lot's herdmen and Abraham's herdmen, "Abraham said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly. And Abraham dwelt in the land of Canaan."\* Lot's worldly wisdom, or, in other words, selfishness, forms a dark background for the bright, heavenly light of the generosity which shines out in Abraham's proposition to Lot, and his magnanimity in letting Lot have the rich fields of the Jordan, while he took the dry and comparatively barren mountains of Canaan. The grand, noble conduct seemed to move the feelings of the Almighty with special love toward Abraham. At first sight, we might think it was pity, but on closer examination it is seen to be admiration and confidence. "And the Lord said unto Abraham, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine

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\*Gen. xiii., 8-13.

eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward : for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it ; for I will give it unto thee.”\* In Abraham, God found a man who had a principle which could not be weighed out against money, and that principle was love for his fellow-men. This principle was the exact opposite which lost us Eden. It was a man rising above the power of Satan’s selfishness, and loving his neighbor as he loved himself. God then and there gave Abraham the land of Palestine, not to lord it with, nor to live luxuriously, but to set up a government under his rule, and that he might make a nation from his loins which would establish the kingdom of heaven on earth, though it largely failed, and which the son of Abraham, Jesus Christ, two thousand years after set up on earth ; and His stately steppings seem now to be that He is about to bring it into the fullness of its fruition.

When Lot’s exceeding sinners in Sodom, down on the plains of the Jordan, gave him trouble, and stole his goods and carried him away captive, Abraham, true to his large-heartedness, “armed his trained servants, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the

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\*Gen. xiii., 14, 15, 17.

people.”\* And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return, “And the king of Sodom said unto Abraham, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abraham said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abraham rich: save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol and Mamre; let them take their portion.”†

We need not be surprised that such a hero for brotherly love in such a selfish world should move the anxious love and care of God, who, like a father pitieth his children, pitieth them that trust Him, spoke to Abraham in a vision, with all the apparent solicitude of a mother to her son amid dangers, “Saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”‡ Oh, Abraham! let not thy noble heart fail thee, as it did thy first parents in the garden of Eden two thousand years before.

When the strangers came to Abraham, at the plains of Mamre, in the heat of the day, as he sat at the door of his tent, we see in the entertainment of them the same simplicity of unselfish affection, the unity and absolute brotherhood of the entire human family as it lay in Abraham's

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\* Gen. xiv., 14, 16. † Gen. xiv., 21-24. ‡ Gen. xv., 1.



mind and heart. His reception of them was with the simplicity and unselfish affection of a child. See him hastening to Sarah, his wife, saying to her : " Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man ; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them ; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat." \* The story is one which brings before us a picture of common life, a common man with the habits and simplicity of the plain and honest farmer of to-day. His wife preparing the meal, his waiting and attending to their needs as they ate, are not the ways of those who wear soft clothing and live in king's houses. Paul exhorts the Hebrews, Abraham's children, two thousand years afterwards, referring to this incident, saying : " Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers : for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." †

Again, Abraham's pleading for the safety of his nephew and all his and the city in which he lived, reminds us of the story of the centurion coming to Christ, pleading for the recovery of his sick servant, and of whom Jesus said, " I have not found so great faith, no, not in all Israel." And it must have made the same impression on Jesus' mind, for He said of this man : I say unto you, that many

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\* Gen. xviii., 6-8. † Heb. xiii., 1, 2.

shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom, the sons of Abraham by blood, and so sons of his kingdom, shall be cast out into darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, from their selfish, grasping, greedy ways. Jesus plainly told the wealthy Sadducees and Pharisees that they were not the children of Abraham in the great relationship of the brotherhood of men, but that they were the children of the devil, and the deeds of their father the devil they did.

Abraham was the father of the faithful, but if the greatest achievement of his faith was his getting up out of the land Ur of the Chaldees and going into a country not knowing whither he went, then he is little more than a Columbus, or the early emigrants to California in search of gold, and no more than our Pilgrim fathers, who left the shores of England for conscience' sake and risked the cold rocks and trackless woods of New England's unpropitious shores. If the greatest exhibition of his faith was that he took Isaac, his son, at God's command, and offered up his only begotten son as a sacrifice to the great Jehovah, then he is only above many of the men of his day in that he intelligently obeyed the command of the true Jehovah, while his fellows were as obedient as he, but theirs were imaginary and heathen deities. Farther than Abraham's great unselfish love for others, we see that his love for his son was more than ordinary men's, and

then in his son was also the hope of the great promise of the Jehovah, all of which strengthens our view of his great faith. This gave the Jehovah the opportunity of teaching the world that though it was in the reach of the faith of a father, and even one so intelligent as Abraham, to surrender his only child at the command of the God of heaven, it was not in the will of the true Jehovah that any man should give his child as a sacrifice to the gods, and forever set His seal of condemnation against the offering of human beings as sacrifices.

Seeing Abraham in these, and adding that he had all the opportunities any man ever had to amass wealth and pile up a fortune, but from the love he had for his fellow-men he would not do it, and when God heaped upon him the treasures of the storehouse of nature in her largest abundance, he would not use them for himself, but for the use of others, we get hold of his great, grand, broad love for men, and a faith which entitles him to be called the "Father of the faithful."

No man ever had greater opportunities to have oppressed the poor and to have rolled in wealth and to have fared sumptuously every day than Abraham, but he would not do it. He resisted the greed of avarice and the pride of wealth, and lived as a common man, using the great powers given him to make mankind happy and to have abundance. Abraham was the early example among men of the heavenly truth: "Whosoever will be chief

among you, let him be your servant.”\* Abraham, it is true, was very rich, but Jesus Christ was far richer. And, as Paul writes to the Corinthians, “though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”† Instead of Abraham being profited by the men who were called his servants, they were profited by him, and he was the servant of his servants, which is the clear color of his entire life and doings. None equaled him then, none have excelled him since, in his large brotherly love, a type of “Jesus, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”‡ Where large businesses have to be managed under one mind, it is Jesus’ plan that the man who stands at the head shall manage the business for all directly connected with it and for all whom it may in any way affect, with generosity and a regard for their interests.

The voice of the great patriarch since he has gone to the world beyond, has been heard once from heaven by the lips of the Saviour. It was to his lost descendant in hell, explaining to him how it came that he was there. This explanation was and is: “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted and thou art tormented,”§ which is a plain-cut statement that it was his selfish way of using and having his wealth that cost him his soul.

Job is quoted as a rich man, in defence of the

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\*Math. xx., 27. †2 Cor. viii., 9. ‡Acts x., 38. §Luke xvi., 25

large accumulations of wealth around us. Certainly nothing could be more unfair than for a religious man to cast this odium upon Job. It was bad enough when Job was living and had the chance to reply. When Zophar the Naamathite intimated to Job that he was a rich man, it stirred him up more than the loss of his property, the boils from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, or anything else that his troublesome friends said to him. And he returned to Zophar such an answer that Zophar said no more, and it would be supposed no one who had any respect for the memory of Job and his patience would repeat the insult.

“But Job answered and said, Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on. Wherefore do the wicked live, become old; yea, are mighty in power? They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?”\*  
“Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof. They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow’s ox for a pledge. They turn the needy out of the way; the poor of the earth hide themselves together. They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that they have no covering in the cold. They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a

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\* Job xxi., 1, 3, 7, 13, 14, 15.

pledge of the poor. They cause him to go naked without clothing, and take away the sheaf from the hungry.”\*

“When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoils out of his teeth.”† “Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?”‡ “If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great,

\* Job xxiv., 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10. † Job xxix., 11-17. ‡ Job xxx., 25.

and because mine hand had gotten much; this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above." \*

Words cannot be written in more severe condemnation of rich men than these. Job resented in sharpest words, and at length, the implication by Zophar that he was in any way like wealthy men in his life and ways. Job was a patriarch like Abraham, and his great holdings were for the good and benefit of those who in any way touched him in life. Instead of tying up the opportunities from the masses, he loosed the productive powers of nature, and caused them to flow out to the masses, to give them abundance and make their lives happier. Look again at his words, as he says, The wicked spend their days in wealth, and say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. God's ways and the men who spend their days in wealth never can agree. Job charges upon the wealthy that they cause the poor to lodge without clothing, that great riches is the reason they have no covering from the cold, and that the rich take away the sheaf from the hungry. He brings as a charge against the wealthy that they take a pledge from the poor, thus denying them the right of security for their loans when dealing with them, as is taught in the parable of the unjust steward, by our Lord and Master. Job's words here are the morning star of the

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\* Job xxxi., 16, 17, 19, 22, 24, 25, 28.



petition in our Lord's Prayer—Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Instead of his life being the life of a wealthy man, he looked upon his great holdings as only for him to see to it that nobody lacked any good thing, and this was to be determined not by his will, but by the will and opinion of the poor. If he had withheld from the poor any of their desires or had ever enjoyed a pleasure they had not shared, or eaten alone, he was to be condemned. As long as he had these great holdings, he recognized the fact that there was not a poor and needy man in the world that he was not debtor to, and that it was his business to hunt up, search out and provide for them; and if he had failed to do so, he said to let his arm fall from his shoulder blade. It could not be said of Job when he came before the great judgment bar of God, that he had not fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick in prison, and ministered to the poor, for there was not even the least of these Christ's brethren he had not hunted up and provided for. Compared with Job's providing for the poor, how weak are the greatest gifts of those men whom the world now calls philanthropists. If the theory be true that Job operated the rolling mills and blast furnaces from which the slag came that now lies at the foot of Mount Sinai, then Job lived in times with demands commensurate with those of men of large means of the present day, and had the same difficulties to meet and overcome. But his management was all that men could wish,

and must have been all that they did desire, for his challenge was that he had not held from any of the poor their desire. There were no strikes under Job, and would be none now if the poor were not oppressed.

This is probably the reason Satan had a grudge against him. His life brought out the selfishness of the wealthy and showed the enormity of their oppressions and wrongs against the poor. The poor, in Job, had a pattern of what all strong men ought to be. For his generosity, God had made him more prosperous than any other man of his time; and this was done by God, not that Job might have the haughty sense of wealth, but that he might feed and clothe the needy poor. Job was true to his mission, and wealthy men, as far as his fame was known, were troubled and rebuked by him in their wronging and robbery of the poor. The selfish devil himself could stand it no longer, and went to God. The Lord knew his desire when He met him, and said to Satan: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth; a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?"\* Satan gave the question a square denial in his answer, saying: "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land; but put forth thine hand

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\*Job i., 8.

now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face."\* The devil looked upon Job's giving as the gifts of the Pharisee or monopolist, to be seen of men, as in some great gifts where the newspapers will get hold of it and blow the trumpet from one end of the land to the other. So he thought Job had made his gifts to be seen of God, and keep on the kind side of God, who was so lavishly pouring the good things from the horn of plenty into the lap of his fortune. To Satan there was, in all Job did, no generosity, no recognition of the brotherhood of men and the fatherhood of God, making each man his brother's keeper, and which principle had been denied by the wicked as early as Cain. Satan's ideas were the common sentiment of the polite society. Job was a keen, deep planner in their eyes, even outwitting the Almighty and making money faster than any of them, making the poor happy with his money, and the wrath of the polite sentiment was decidedly against him.

The Lord had in Job what He called a perfect man—a man dominated by the right spirit, a man whose motives were upright and movements were in brotherly love. Job did not serve God and treat the poor right for profit and gain, but it was his love to man that prompted him to it. It was not that either God or men might see his acts, nor that he might have the approval of either in the more rapid accumulation of wealth. His deeds were unselfish, welling up out of a heart with love for

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\*Job i., 9, 10.

all men and pity for those in need, which moved the principle in him to action, that what he had was not his own, but for the use and good of all men.

So the Lord said to Satan: "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand."\* And Satan went to the work of destroying his property. "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."†

Satan, foiled here, went to the Lord again, and Jehovah, triumphing in His hero Job, said to Satan: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth; a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause."‡ We must pause to note how differently the words upright man and integrity are used here from the general use of the words, where it means little more than living in accordance with the statutory and common laws and the dicta of society; in fine, the opinions of men. Here it means all that is in that wide, brotherly love taught by Jesus Christ. Satan had thousands who were upright men, of high integrity, philanthropists and benevolent in the eyes of men; and of all men most enraged against Job, these sleek hypocrites were the worst.

Satan's answer shows he was greatly in earnest when he said: "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man

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\*Job i., 12. †Job i., 22. ‡Job ii., 3.

hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.”\* “And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thy hand; but save his life.”† Then Satan went out to try and torment Job, and the greatest battle of temptation that ever was fought between mere man and the devil was fought, and through it all Job maintained his integrity and sinned not with his lips. Another bright star rose to shine in the world to light men on in their way to perfection and brotherly love.

When Job’s temptations were past and his victory won, God opened the storehouses of nature to him, “so the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.”‡ Thus God early taught the world that when men obey and follow His commands, deal with all men as their brethren, doing unto all as they would have others do unto them, nature will yield up her stores as in no other way.

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\* Job ii., 4, 5. † Job ii., 6. ‡ Job xlii., 12.

## CHAPTER XII.

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### THE PLUTOCRACY.

**A**T THE close of the war, and shortly before the tragical death of Abraham Lincoln, "Honest Old Abe," unselfish Lincoln uttered the most remarkable prophecy since the days of John the Revelator. He said: "I see in the near future a crisis arising that unnerves me, and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. As a result of the war, corporations have been enthroned, an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed. I feel more anxiety for my country than ever before, even in the midst of the war."

This prophecy is already approaching fulfillment, and its dark shadow covers our entire land. On an average, the laboring man receives about one dollar per day for his honest toil, while the capitalist from his large holdings receives, it is fair to say, three hundred dollars a day. The entire increase of wealth in this country is going into the hands of capitalists. A few thousand men out of nearly

seventy millions hold over half the wealth of our land, and while their number is becoming smaller, their possessions are rapidly growing larger. The wealth is passing away from the common people, and their numbers are steadily increasing. Joseph Cook says: "If the causes which produce concentration of wealth continue, the Republic will soon be owned by less than fifty thousand people." There are fifty men now in this country who have the power to stop the wheels of industry in twenty-four hours throughout the entire land. In taxing the people by the manipulation of prices, we have a few great plutocrats doing that which neither Congress nor state legislatures would dare attempt—powers which, if exerted in Great Britain, would shake the throne to its foundation, and no political ruler on Continental Europe dare essay.

All this enormous concentration of wealth and usurpation of power is the work of less than a third of a century. Our two greatest plutocrats each receive annually from \$7,000,000 to \$8,000,000; or from one hundred and forty to one hundred and sixty times the salary we pay the President of the United States. Queen Victoria receives \$300,000, or only one-twenty-seventh of this amount. The entire royalty of England costs that nation \$2,834,000, or something over one-third as much as either one of these two men take out of the life-blood of this Nation. In other words, two men cost us more than five times as much as it would have cost this Nation had the Revolutionary



War never been fought, and England had loaded onto these colonies the entire expense of all her royalty. This, however, is but a speck compared with the aggregate amount which is absorbed by the millionaires of our land. Is it any wonder that while we are in the midst of abundance, we are also in the midst of hard times; with debts increasing while there is no war, nor even remarkable enlargement of public improvements.

The far-seeing Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay, of England, said of this country some years ago: "As for America, I appeal to the twentieth century; either some Cæsar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your Republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century, as the Roman empire was in the fifth; with this difference, that the Huns and the Vandals who ravished Rome came from without her borders, while your Huns and Vandals will be engendered within your own country and by your own institutions." Macaulay, as Lincoln, saw in the development of the embryotic forces of our free institutions, in our large and productive country, that which would lead to the present condition of affairs, and in the end, by the ripening and maturing of selfish plans, would be productive of curses never felt by the human race, in the threatening reign of plutocracy.

Twenty-five years ago our Nation was ruled with men chosen by the people, and when the people

thought these men did not represent them and their interests, they let them stay at home. But now, many of our United States senators get their places by their wealth, and are holding them by means of their wealth, while some speculate, by the opportunity their position gives them, out of the necessities, the rights and freedom of the people whose interests they pretend to represent. Wall street and the Bank of England in many of our important National moves dictate now what shall be done. We have senators who are directed in their movements more by their holdings in England and Wall street than by the interests of the people they pretend to serve. This state of affairs has been rapidly increasing in the last few years, and the two great money centers, Wall street and the Bank of England, are growing into one, and their power over the Nation for weal or woe increases every year.

These wealthy men who rule our Nation were not appointed by the people, neither can the people bid them retire when their interests are not served. They are self-appointed, self-assumed emperors, or rather, dictators and tyrants, independent of the will of the people. All this power has grown up in less than a third of a century. In this condition the maxim most fitly applies, "For whosoever hath to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."\* Much easily

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\* Math. xiii., 12.

gains more. The strength already won by wealth is more than half the battle to own the entire Republic, and it need take less years between this and the final victory than it has taken to travel thus far.

We are living under the stars and stripes, and proudly call ourselves a free people. But what is freedom, and what is a free people? Our Declaration of Independence says: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Is this true of our country to-day? Does not one man practically own and control one of our largest products, namely, the oil? Oil is not free to the people of this Nation for the pursuit of happiness. One man reigns over it and holds it in his grasp as an absolute dictator, with empire that no political despot ever dared to exceed. Who made him an overseer over this part of God's heritage? God never did. God put the oil in the ground for His children, and not to build up the great Standard oil. The people of the United States never gave it to him. He took it. He assumed the control, and holds it with the permission of neither God nor man.

The meat trade is fast going into the hands of one or two men. A line of railroads stretches from ocean to ocean that is under one control. Another similar combination south of it is not only possible, but probable. These two combines formed, and the absorbing of all the other lines of railroads in the

United States would be a natural result, rather than a difficult task. These two, having the field, would not compete, but combine, and the man who would stand at the head of this great combination could defy the powers at Washington and all the state capitals. He could build up one town and tear down another. Congressmen and statesmen would be compelled to bow to him, or he could, and probably would, make it very unpleasant for them and shear them of their power. Nearly all we have either comes or goes on wheels, and he who dictates the commerce of our Nation dictates how we shall live, by saying what it shall cost us. Alarming as this may seem, it is a condition of things which may be here inside of five years.

Again, let one management own the meat trade, and he who manages that will dictate what the farmer shall receive for his sheep, his hogs and his cattle. If there is no competition, anyone knows the price paid will be merely large enough to allow the farmer to live over, so as to raise more stock for the plutocrat to speculate on next year and add to his already too many millions. In fact, the meat market is almost now ruled by two men, and see where the price of stock has gone and where it is going.

In the same way, men are at liberty to form monopolies on the wheat, corn, coal, lead, iron, silver, gold, and every great industry in our land. They are already trying it, and the outlook is that their attempts will be successful. Over four hundred

combines and trusts are reported in our country. Many of them are in their infancy, but when these have succeeded, there will be nothing left out that is worth having, and the small dealer will be a thing of history.

There is nothing easier than for two great combines to unite and make one great combination. Consolidation, combination, is one of the staple items of our daily newspapers. Lines of business are crystallizing into large and larger combinations, and every year it is becoming harder and harder for the small tradesman to stand. A certain amount of capital, with which a man could keep on his feet in the swift running stream of business last year, is too small to stem the rising current this year. And so on, every year it is becoming harder for the small dealer to make anything, and for the man with limited means to get a start. The small dealer will go down first, then the larger dealer will go, and so on till all wealth centers in one head. The weaker will be slain by the hands of the stronger—till one management holds the situation. Everything is rapidly moving towards a few centers, and the farther it goes, the greater the progress will be from the nature of augmented strength gathering speed and size, the simplicity of the business gravitating into fewer hands.

The world is practically one to-day, as it was at the building of the tower of Babel, or as it was under one control when Jesus Christ came. We are knit together by telegraphs, rail-

roads, the daily press and travel, so that we know sooner about our neighbors in China, Japan, Paris, London, Berlin and all the cities of the United States, than our grandfathers did about the township in which they lived. We read and talk at our breakfast tables of what happened in all parts of the world the day before. The prices of other nations yesterday determine our prices to-day. The world is moving as a unit, and its financial interests hang one upon another. National political boundary lines are breaking down; trade, commerce and travel make us one.

It is impossible for the world to be again conquered by a Cæsar, an Alexander or a Napoleon, with the sword. The great nations of the western hemisphere have made this an impossibility. The great oceans separating us from them puts a quietus on the ambition of men to conquer the world by force of arms, for it is out of the question. But the old ambition is still alive, active, and as full of determination as ever, only in another form, and even more tyrannical, more selfish, and by far more hellish and difficult to oppose. The power of the divine right of kings can only be extended where the monarch can land his armies, but the money power, by virtue of the right of title, can extend her empire regardless of oceans, different continents, gunboats, standing armies or fortifications. Right of title is cosmopolitan. It reigns the same in all climates, zones, races or tongues, regardless of the domicile of him who holds the scepter. A man

in London with the deeds of an American railroad in his safe and name, controls that road as much as if he lived in the United States. No matter how much the interests and fate of our freedom are involved in the management of that road, his control is just the same. European capital owns enough land in the United States to make a tract as large as New England, with the exception of Maine. English capitalists own enough of our securities to dictate the movement, in no small degree, of our finances. The demonetization of silver was at her behest, and no monometalist is foolish enough to say it was in the general interests of the common people, but rather in fear of her threats. If the play of this movement means in the end to buy up all the silver mines of the world by a great combine, then it is a strategic movement of far-seeing sagacity and of enormous development. This done, the money power would immediately raise the cry for the remonetization of silver. With one-half of the money of the world under the control of one management, it would be easy to corner the other half and, with the blood of the Nation on their hands, they would have the life of the Nation and the world also.

There are only two powers in the world which are in position to conquer the world, and these two are actively engaged in the field—money, wealth and mammon on the one hand, with God, Jesus Christ and good-will to all men on the other. The success of the one is the overthrow of the other.



For one to conquer means defeat to the other. It is true that the moneyed powers, as in the days of Christ, are willing to march under the banners of religion, if their success is thereby greater and more speedily advanced; but it means in the end that the spoils will be theirs, and it is only the deceitfulness of Satan, in that he is willing to assume any garb to gain his end. It was the breaking away from the grasp and formality of the moneyed power that has been the underlying principle of every reformation of Christianity in the world. The cleanest-cut battle ever fought between right and wrong, squarely confronting each other, is before us, and to meet it seems to be the task assigned this generation. It is brotherly love, peace, good-will to all men, prosperity to the masses, the elevation of the human race, general intelligence, charity, Jesus Christ and God arrayed against selfishness, oppression, wealth, money in the hands of the few, degradation to the masses, crimes of all kind, wickedness, mammon or the devil. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon, for either ye will hate the one, and love the other; or else ye will hold to the one and despise the other."\*

Our century has been marked with a rising feature which has become universal in the last quarter; that is, the time has fully come when the soldiers of Christ must arm themselves and march forward and take the world for their Leader. They have their pickets out in every nation under heaven, with

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\* Math. vi., 24.

confident expectation that not many decades will pass till the world is given to God and His Christ. The fact is fully demonstrated by practical experience that the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Bible is fitted and adapted for all generations, for every nation and every clime, whether "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians."\* The establishment of the Church at the Pentecost was the type of the destiny of the Church of Jesus Christ, and pointed out that its field was the entire world.

Both right of title and Christianity are the same the world over. The forces are universal, alike, at home and adapted to reign in any nation, or hold the world under their sway. There is more avowed and announced determination on the part of Christ's followers; but the moneyed power is equally as hard at work and is making rapid progress.

There is nothing this side of eternal woe that men need fear more than the threatening, approaching plutocracy. There is nothing which so effectually petrifies and damns all virtue out of the human heart as amassing wealth rapidly. The saloon-keeper knows he is a sinner, and the drunkard, with few exceptions, is ashamed of his drinking.

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\*Acts ii, 9, 10, 11.

But the corporation robber, stock thief, plutocrat, oppressing the poor, is proud of his success in money-getting, and his vanity is enlarged. If he is a member of the Church, it is not improbable that the minister, in his innocence, will hold him up as an example for young men, to show them how a Christian man, who joined the Church in his youth, has been wonderfully blessed of God, in a successful life of amassing wealth. The rich man may stand up in prayer-meeting, bold as a Pharisee, telling the people how kind God has been to him, while the God of heaven knows he stole his way to his position, legally, to be sure, but in violation of Jesus Christ's law of brotherly love. Among his employes his way must be considered right, and the employe who opposes him must go, for his will and notions, independent of men or God, right or wrong, must pass as right. And people flatter and fawn, and tell him patronizingly that what he does is right and smart, when in others it would be reprehensible and ridiculous. Here was old Pharaoh's condition, and his heart, by God's own natural, inevitable law, was hardened, so he could not see his wrongs against the Hebrew slaves, nor hear their cries of distress. The Bible laconically puts it, "God hardened Pharaoh's heart."\*

I am informed that a plutocrat, who is very strict in his observance of all eclecticism, the commands of the reformatory societies, of his meats, drinks, and the Sabbath day, in short, all the

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\*Ex. vii., 13.

traditions of men, one hot summer Saturday afternoon, sat in the shade watching some score of men digging a trench. At the close of the day he went to his foreman and said, "That old fellow yonder, I have seen resting on his spade several times this afternoon. Give him his time and let him go." The foreman replied, "The man is old and the day hot; he has been a long time in our employ, and still does a good day's work." But the plutocrat answered, "We want effective men; he is getting too old. Give him his time to-night." Then he said, "The man over yonder in blue drilling overalls, I saw resting on his spade a time or two, also. Give him his time to-night." The foreman said, "That man has been sick, and has not yet fully recovered. I think he earns the dollar a day which we give him, and then, poor fellow, he got behind while he was sick, and needs the money badly for his family." The plutocrat replied, "We have nothing to do with his private affairs or his family. Give him his time to-night." Sunday morning the plutocrat arose, and with his family repaired to the house of God, with a sanctimonious air, and when the contribution box came round, laid in his check for the benevolences of the church. This was seen of men. Few are the plutocrats who do not keep up some form of benevolence, to make the world and themselves believe that they are benevolent and generous, while the poor in their employ might as well be between the upper and nether millstones. Of such conduct, God says,

by the mouth of his prophet Micah, "O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?"\* Jesus, quoting the same to the sanctimonious, wealthy, hard-hearted Pharisees, said, "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless."† The conduct of the above-described plutocrat is what is driving thousands and tens of thousands from the Church of God to-day, and the main reason for the alarming gap that yawns between the masses and the Church. On the authority of Jesus Christ, we say, "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."‡

It is true that some of our plutocrats pay their clerks good wages and high-up men good salaries. Certainly no one can think that this is done merely out of generosity and love for the men. Part of it may be to be seen of men, but the larger reason is, probably, they have to pay these prices to get the service they need and want. But when the small dealer is wiped out by the great monopolies grasping every line of trade that is worth having, there will be an army of competent, efficient and educated men turned into the field to compete with the host of clerks who now have all they can do to get places and meager wages. There will then be no opportunities to make a living, except to work for

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\*Micah vi., 8. †Math. xii., 7. ‡Luke xvii., 2.

the monopolist, or farm, and the farm life will be reduced to the merest living. Then there will be plenty of good men for every place, and the monopolists will have the entire control of the employment of them. Think not that these monopolists will compete one against another and keep wages up at the expense of their returns being less, when they could easily agree to make a scale that is only above starvation. When the vanity, independence, cruelty, power and callosity of the plutocrat's heart has been intensified by another quarter of a century, we will find that all kind of labor will be treated as in the case referred to, of the men digging the ditch.

Things are bad enough now, but these are only the beginnings of sorrow. Men will then be treated worse than the blacks in the South in the days of African slavery. The blacks were owned by their masters, and they cared for them as their property; when they became old, the attachment, like the farmer to his faithful old horse, existed, and they were kept for the good they had already done, and were not turned out on the roadside to starve and die. But in the approaching plutocracy, men will be hired by the day, month or year, and their employers will take no more thought for their families, what they eat, where they sleep, or when they die, than the man who hired a livery horse five years ago cares where he is to-night. The blacks never tasted civilization, were lazy and indifferent to their wrongs, and all the sweet melodies of "Suwanee River" and "The Old Kentucky Home," written by Foster, who had

never seen slavery, found little of the reality in the actual plantations of the South; but our children, with each generation growing more and more refined and higher bred, will suffer a hundred-fold more in their sensitive nerves than did the blacks of the South. The slave-holder was not pushing, from climatic influences, but was easy-going; not so thrifty as the Yankee, thirsty for money and greedy for gain, and did not oppress, drive and tyrannize, like the coming plutocrat. How fittingly the Old Testament writers referred to this relation of the employer to the employed as whoredom, and against it uttered the most solemn protests and denunciations; for it was an entire abnegation of Moses' law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord."\*

Wages will be reduced to the very lowest living point possible, if not to the very verge of starvation. The good wages the plutocrat pays to-day is not a matter of generosity, but a question of policy. Men who get rich do not run their business for the advantage of the employes, or the benefit of the community; they do it for what is in it in dollars and cents. It pays to give good wages, because they cannot get effective men unless they do. It pays in dollars and cents to treat them well, for when they do they get manifold the value of their gifts in better service. Efficient men, not well paid and well treated, will seek and find other places of employment, or go into business for themselves.

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\* Lev. xix., 18.



But when all lines of business shall be in the hands of combines and trusts, or, in other words, in the hands of the monopolists, even the stores in the country and villages will be agencies in the hands of men employed by the trusts, and farming will be as the peasantry; a man can no longer go into business and employ himself. Then the already too large army of men seeking for employment will be greatly swelled, competition will be much sharper, and, by the great law of supply and demand, wages must sink lower and lower, while the over-fattened greed of the plutocrats gains strength.

Thousands of girls are now sent into prostitution, because their employers, to compete with trade, have reduced their wages below the living point, and the wages of men in factories and mills are reduced for the same reason, till it is hard to live. Men in factories and mills are given quietly to understand (and sometimes not so quietly) that they must vote the will of their bosses, or others will fill their places. The object and end of the free ballot is defeated, and the farther this power of money goes, the more flagrant will this abomination become. It is not long after the rights of property are invaded till the rights of liberty are invaded also. The *vox populi* will no longer be the *vox Dei*, unless it rises and asserts its God-given rights, and does it in such a way that there will be no misunderstanding in its meaning; and that is that this oppression must stop its onward march and beat a hasty retreat.

The fact of the matter is, men will prefer death rather than life before this thing comes to pass; and many will be the lives offered up on the altar of freedom, if the strong arm of the force of religion is not invoked while it is yet day, and the lamp of privilege still holds out to burn. The common people are yet a power in the land, but with waning strength. If they do not move soon, "The harvest will be past and the summer ended and we will not be saved."\* Why should we leave no heritage to our children worth the having, when our fathers left us so much? "There is a balm in Gilead, there is a physician there; why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered."†

We are not drawing a darker picture than the condition of things warrants. To feed avarice does not fill an aching void. The more a man gets, the more he wants, and the more cruel his selfishness becomes. A radical departure from our present way of dealing with the question is demanded, and a steadfastness of purpose and a consecration to the work such as the world has never seen.

The kings and potentates of the world got their places by conquest or inheritance. As a rule, they were not greedy money-makers. If they had their wives, their wine, enough revenue to support these, and were let alone, they were mostly content. Their subjects were born into the world under

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\*Jer. viii., 20. †Jer. viii., 22.

oppression and never knew the sweets of freedom, and were ignorant of their wrongs.

But the plutocrat gains his position by the exercise of selfishness, and the higher he rises the more potent it is in its development. These fortunes have been built up with total disregard for all fair dealing and in utter violation of the law of brotherly love and the rights of humanity. No class of men so dodge taxes as the rich. The higher men rise in wealth, the more heartless they are in oppression of the hireling, the more unscrupulous they are in their dealings, and the harder it becomes to convict them in their violations of the law. The building up of great fortunes leaves behind them in the wake of their path wrecked corporations, weak dealers crowded down and out, their property sold when they were helpless and when it was under dishonor, for a mere bagatelle of what it was really worth. Added to this, our plutocratic governors will be men who were born poor. The most cruel slave-drivers were those who were raised from their own number, so our coming masters will be all the more cruel from the fact that they were raised from the poor and common people.

To become great in the political field requires a great schooling and drill in accommodating one's self to the pleasures, conveniences and accommodations of others, and one learns to act the gentleman, or he is soon ruled out of the field and off the race track for honors. To be a great general requires heroism and the endangering of one's life, and all

for the cause, thus developing high patriotism and unselfishness ; moreover, he must please and inspire the army by true and great manhood, or the soldiers will not follow him. To be a great orator, a man must have large sympathy for the common people, or he cannot draw and attract them by that magnetism which is required. To be a poet, a man must have a fine nature and be sensitive to the higher graces and qualities of the human heart. But to get rich, the less soul a man has and the more deceitful his heart, the better, provided he has a commanding nature and a clear brain. It takes a man with a low estimation of true happiness, true manhood, and a high appreciation of money. A man with a great soul cannot get rich. The demands for the good of his fellow-men will take away his opportunities for great deals, and would take his money if he had it.

The man who spends his money for strong drink may reform and redeem the time, and still be the husband and father to his family in providing for them. No man need spend his money with the saloon-keeper, and does not, unless he wills to do so, and it is in his power and choice to be free from him. But the plutocrat, like the midnight robber, robs us with no consent of ours, or even complicity with him. He compels the circumstances around us which put us in his grasp, and then wrests from us that which we have a divine right to from God Himself. If a man should kill himself with strong drink, as long as there are opportunities for the

people, his wife and children may economize their forces and means, and still enjoy and have the comforts of life. But when the opportunities are taken up and held in the hands of the few mighty and wealthy, the seven vials of wrath will be poured out upon the earth.

Of course, there will be difficulties to be surmounted in getting rid of these great fortunes. And to do this will tax the energy, intelligence and piety of this generation; and if they do it wisely, their names will go down on the pages of history in high honor. Why should we wait till all the great lines of trade are in the hands of the few and we cast out of the garden of the Lord's heritage? Shall we talk about the washing of cups and brazen vessels, and a new moon and a holiday, and neglect the weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy and faith? When will things make themselves better? Will it be when we are bound hand and foot, and when the common people are reduced to the servitude of hirelings? Do not the sweat-houses, the enforced idleness of millions of men who would gladly work; the girls walking the streets, not because they are lazy and unwilling to work, but because the condition of society compels them to their vocation for food and clothing; the thousands going up and down the world, seeking for work and finding none, arouse us from our slumber and point us to our dangers? Are not these poor, unfortunate ones where we and our children will be in a very few years, if the present state of things continues?

## CHAPTER XIII.

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### THE RIGHT OF TITLE.

**L**IBERTY and freedom mark the tide of rising civilization, and in its fullness are equal rights and opportunities to all men. Anything which hampers the equality of rights to all men, ties up the natural productive powers of nature and holds them from the masses, is antagonistic to civilization and hostile to liberty in her onward march. The gigantic foe with which liberty has always had to contend in her march towards freedom is right of title. Where honorable men were vested with this right of title, and no social or civil law of the land was violated in consequence thereof, history shows that the people have never risen up to remove their wrongs and assert their rights. When our forefathers rose up to throw off the yoke of the mother country, the inspiring motive was not that England had no right to rule over the thirteen colonies and that it was hostile to their unalienable rights; but it was because the rule over them had been enlarged and abused, till it became painful, oppressive and outrageous. "All experience hath shown that men are more disposed to suffer, where evils are suffer-

able, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.”\* But when the fathers framed the Declaration of Independence, they made it revolve around the principle that this Nation should be a land where all men would have equal rights to life and the pursuit of happiness.

Notwithstanding, in this land of the free and home of the brave, nearly one hundred years passed away before they could apply the principle of their Nation’s life to the man whose skin was black. This was because, forsooth, the great right of title or right of property held the black man a slave. Two of the largest interests of the Nation—cotton and sugar—were supposed to rest on slavery, and it was thought the Nation would be bankrupted if the slaves were set free. This looks to us now like counting out dollars against the souls of men, but it did not look so to the people then, and even forty years ago there could scarcely have been found a man who thought it was wrong to hold property in human flesh, if that flesh was covered with a black skin. It was hard to arouse public conscience and get even men proud of their freedom to see that it was wrong to hold their fellow-men as property, and persuade these religious men to endorse the great fore-ordained, eternal truth of God, namely, that no one should attempt to control the choice and free acts of the soul of another. The crack of the slave-driver’s whip was echoed by orators, and

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\*The Declaration of Independence.



pictures of wives separated from their husbands and children torn from their mothers' arms were held before the imagination of the people of the North, on lips of eloquence never excelled in the land. Public sentiment was stirred in that wonderful campaign for brotherly love, also by songs inspired in the souls of kind poets, which brought the sorrows and sufferings of the slaves on the plantations to our homes and firesides. Books were written which had an immense circulation, but still the great majority of the people remained comparatively indifferent to the great curse resting on their land and Nation.

Of course, they held that immorality was wrong, and the family ties were sacred, but right of title in their eyes was divine, and whatever else suffered, it must not be touched. Cotton was king and sugar was queen, and he who dared to disturb the slaves was striking at the prosperity of the Nation, and his teachings were treasonable and insurrectional. George Washington, the father of our country, held slaves, and Abraham had slaves, and the apostle said, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters"\* (which, by the way, was only a wise admonition of Paul to the slaves not to give their masters needless excuse and occasion for increasing their burdens and subjecting them to painful punishment), and so the changes were rung by statesmen and clergy. Able statesmen and eloquent ministers satisfied the South and the conservative

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\*Eph. vi., 5.

people of the North, which constituted the aristocracy and wealth, that slavery was not wrong, *per se*, in itself, but only the abuse of slavery was a sin. The first Abolitionists, moved with the love of Christ in their hearts for their brethren in chains, were branded as heretics, and the early movement was driven into infidelity against the Church of Christ by the blindness of its own people. The ministers declared that better men never sat down at the Communion table of the Lord Jesus Christ than some of the greatest slaveholders of the South. And the inference to be drawn was—hands off slavery. They claimed the blacks were naturally servants, and incapable of self-government and exercising the rights of freedom. These arguments were exactly the same as our plutocratic argument, that the poor among us are incapable of self-government, and need some one to conserve their money for them. Only in our case it is without any reason or justification of argument. It is radically non-American and in violation of the very heart-life of our Declaration of Independence.

The devil can hold steady in his possessions and appear quite saint-like as long as he is not disturbed, but when disturbed, he is almost sure to show his cloven foot. He grasps his holdings tighter, rendering them more tyrannical and offensive, and men rise and throw off the yoke of his oppression. Lincoln was elected on a platform with no plank in it demanding the abolition of slavery. The sentiment of the people was not up to this point; but

they did refuse to allow the North to be made any longer the hunting-ground for the fugitive slave, and asked that slavery be limited to its then present boundaries. This in reality was an admission that slavery was wicked and wrong, but they would not touch it where it was established, for that came in conflict with the right of title, and before it they stood still and bowed their heads, though that right was held in absolute defiance of Jesus Christ's entire teachings and life. The ministers stood before the slaves exhorting them to obey their masters, as an oracle from heaven bidding them to be content with their chains and endure their wrongs. All this they did on one misinterpreted and misapplied passage of Scripture, while they set aside the whole system of divine truth in the Old and New Testaments. Of course, they did wish the masters would stop breaking the seventh commandment, and compelling the blacks to do the same. However, the slave must obey his master, and they hoped in some way or other to get the masters to quit their wicked ways; but they gave the whole of their energies in endeavoring to reconcile the slaves to their masters, and trying to get the tormenting, fanatical Abolitionist to quiet down. We must not blame these ministers and statesmen too much for their partiality to the slaveholders, till we consider that the aristocracy and wealthy men of the Nation were slaveholders, and they were standing before the right of title, in the hands of wealth, as we are doing to-day, cowering

before it and fawning on the monopolists and wealthy men.

But God would not suffer the wrong any longer. The doctrine of brotherly love is the mightiest power that ever filled the engine of the human heart, and when fired by a divine coal from off the altar of God, there is not strength enough in men or devils to withstand it or stop it in its course. The leaven of the kingdom of heaven, which the woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole lump was leavened, was working. Slavery was wrong, and the time had fully come when God's people must go free.

Satan, in his madness and blindness, led on the people of the South till they fired on Fort Sumpter. The Nation was plunged into civil war. For three long years the people stood out against God, while battlefields were strewn with the blood of the brightest sons of our land, and every house sat in mourning. The struggle was long, and it seemed as if it were almost even hung, yet confined so that the soil of no state was stained with the blood of battlefields where slavery never had existed. At length, God intervened His hand, in His righteousness determining that the wrath of man should praise Him, and one sentiment was made to prevail all over the North, which was: It was impossible to put down the Rebellion, if the slaves were not freed, and the voice of the people, as the voice of God, demanded of Lincoln that he must let the people go. Then, and not till then, Lincoln

wrote and signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which was a war measure, for the people in the North were not even yet ready, on Christian grounds, to declare that the slave ought to be and must be freed.

At the Hebrew slaves' emancipation, the paschal lambs were slain, typifying the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, Who should be slain for the ransom of all men. Jesus Christ's death was an offering for freedom on earth, as well as for freedom from sin, to prepare men for heaven; so all bloody wars for liberty since that are superfluous. But, why, in our late war, should there have been a second offering for sin, with the lambs the sons of the Nation, when "our great High Priest had once offered himself for the sins of the people; and by himself purged our sins, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."\* What ill-timed shedding of human blood and needless sacrifice of precious lives!

Had the Church, north and south, sanctified in brotherly love, obedient to the Master's command when He said, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,"† risen in her might, she would have wiped the dark stain of slavery from off the face of the land, and that without the farther shedding of blood. Had she done so, what treasures would

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\*Heb. †Math. vii., 12.

have been saved! how many precious lives would have been spared! and how many broken hearts never would have been!

They counted out cotton and sugar, money and title to property, against the lives and the unalienable rights of their fellow-men; but the price they bargained for in the betrayal of Jesus Christ's brethren, they could not hold, and had to give it up, and we confess we sinned against innocent blood.

We stand, to-day, confronted with a question of far greater magnitude. The question is whether we shall be plunged into war, insurrection, bloodshed, discontent such as the world never saw, arson, perhaps anarchy, atheism, tyranny, slavery for our children; or shall we rise up and wrest the scepter, wrongfully held by capital, from her hands. It is weak to talk about reconciling capitalists and the laborers. God never will let them be reconciled. He has sounded the notes of freedom, and He never will beat a retreat. The laboring men may have done many things which were wrong and advocated many foolish principles, but, nevertheless, their voice is the ancient cry awakened from the brick-kilns of Egypt, and their cries have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and, I tell you, He will avenge them speedily. War is better than slavery, but better still is agitation, clear, positive, fearless, unselfish; not as man pleasers, but pleasing God and in the sight of God, declaring the whole counsels of God, as Jesus did, and then being willing to go with Him to crucifixion. While cap-

ital and labor will never shake hands and be at peace, with God's approval, capital and labor will be at peace, and that will be when labor holds and owns capital, for capital belongs to labor. The time has fully come when the divine order which went forth at the morning of creation: "By the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread till thou return to the ground," shall be obeyed, as being the only divine right of title to property. It is not a question whether it will or will not be done, but the question is whether we shall be heroes in the battle for the Lord, or whether we, like the cowardly Hebrew slaves fearing the giants in Canaan and the sons of Anak, shall not go up and take the world for God against the mighty. Our carcasses may rot in the wilderness of weakness and timidity, if not selfishness; but God's truth will march on. We are brought face to face with the enemy, Right of Title, unmasked and uncovered. We must determine and settle the great question that right of title to great wealth is a peril to the happiness of men, is wrong, unlawful, and we must compel it to give way. This is the only thing which will take the wild mania for money-making out of the hearts of the people, and this effectually put into execution will do it. This is God's remedy. It is Jesus Christ's remedy, as I will show in another chapter.

There is before us the opportunity of being the greatest heroes the world has ever seen, or, if not, the biggest skulks that ever filled a coward's grave. The Dred Scott Decision and the sermons and de-



bates of the pro-slavery divines should stand in this Nation as a loud warning to those who would suppress the awakening sentiments of the masses, calling for higher liberty and greater accomplishments in brotherly love, lest they too be found unhappily fighting against God; for the word of the Lord will have free course, it will run and be glorified.

The great principle to be established is not without its forerunners in law. We may say that we are in the starlight age of this truth, and waiting for the great orb to rise upon our world. Our police regulation, the right or power of every sovereign state, binds every one of its citizens to use his property so as not to interfere with the reasonable use and enjoyment by others of their property. Every property owner is bound to so use and enjoy his own property as not to interfere with the general welfare of the community in which he lives. Whatever restraints the legislature may impose upon the use and enjoyment of property within the reason and principle of this duty, the owner must submit to, and for any inconvenience or loss which he sustains thereby, he is without remedy; it is his misfortune. To illustrate: A building which is in such condition as to endanger life and property, may be declared a nuisance, and destroyed without compensation to the owner. A man who owned the fee of the land of part of the Boston harbor was forbidden by an act of the legislature from taking sand from the sea shore, and when he did, he was found guilty under this act. A hog

pen may be abolished, or a stagnant pool of water filled up or drained, without compensation for the property destroyed or interfered with, and at the expense of the owner. Low, wet grounds in a populous location may be filled up at the expense of the owner, for the purpose of preserving the public health. Intoxicating liquors kept or made in violation of the law may be destroyed and their manufacture prohibited, though the result of such prohibiting may be to render the buildings, machinery and fixtures used for that purpose of little or no value. A public nuisance may be abated, and private property interfered with or destroyed for the public welfare. The conduct of any business detrimental to public interests may be prohibited. Property kept or made in violation of law may be destroyed.

Then the same principle of invading the right of title of some for the safety of the many is recognized in law, of the demolition of buildings to prevent the spread of conflagration where the owner is without remedy, unless specially provided for. Also in war, private property may be taken or destroyed in the enemy's country, whether belonging to foe or friend, useful to the enemy for attack or defence or subsistence; and in the actual operations of war, in battle, in the movements of troops, in construction of works of attack or defence, in all these cases, property taken, injured or destroyed, the owners of the property are without remedy. Even property wantonly destroyed by troops comes under

the same law. In all these cases, the general good and welfare is paramount to the personal or individual interests holding or owning the property. The sovereignty of the state is exercised for the protection of the public welfare, and every right is held subject to the restriction that it shall not be exercised so as to injure others. The great law of eminent domain is the right or power of a sovereign state to appropriate private property to particular uses, for the purpose of promoting the general welfare. For the public good, the property of the individual is taken, without his consent, for the purpose of being devoted to some particular use, either by the state itself, or by a corporation, public or private, or by a private citizen.

Every right, from an absolute ownership in property down to a mere easement, is purchased and held subject to the restriction that it shall be so exercised as not to injure others. It is no new principle to be established, but the application of a principle already recognized as humane and God-like. Ours is to apply it in its broadest sense and against the strongest powers.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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### THE FOLLY OF WEALTH.

IN ALL ages there has been an exaggerated desire for wealth, an exaggerated admiration for those who possess it, and an exaggerated belief of its influence in producing or increasing the happiness of life ; and from these errors a flood of cares, jealousies and meannesses have devastated the life of man. There is no sin in the world so absolutely inexcusable and that has so little reason in it, and, at the same time, so destructive to good morals and the happiness of all, as the sin of hoarding up wealth and riches. The testimony of all who have possessed it is that it does not add a single hour more of joy or substantial pleasure. It makes an abject slave both of body and soul out of the man winning it. The race for wealth dries up all the nobler passions of the soul, makes a man selfish, fills him with vanity, pride, removes him from touch with his fellows, and shuts out from him that largest field for enjoyment in this life, viz., the pleasure which a man receives in rejoicing with his neighbors in their prosperity, and the consciousness within that his life is making their sorrows less and their happiness

greater. In the chase for wealth, men break themselves down at forty and often die before they are fifty. If this were all, the world could well afford to spare the selfish fellow. It would be sweeter, the average honesty among men would be greater, and the world would be happier without him. The Scriptures would be fulfilled that "the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness, and when the wicked perish there is shouting."\* His sin then would be no worse than drunkenness and harlotry, in that it would be merely self-destructive.

However, the shortening of the days of the rich man is the smaller part of his sin. The evils caused by wealthy men making crime fashionable; great firms, in the race for wealth, crowding down the wages of girls below the living point, and so compelling them to go into lives of shame to obtain a living, and making men toil hard for a mere livelihood for their families, are by far the greater crimes against society and God.

James says: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped

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\*Prov. xi., 5, 10.

are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.”\* The richer a man gets, the farther he is removed from being dependent upon his fellow-men. This dependence upon each other is the equation of correction in life which checks our natures to keep us from becoming overbearing with our fellow-men. Any class of men will bear with good grace reproof for their sins from the messenger of God, given in a meek and kind spirit, better than the rich man, and especially if this be for his sins of money-getting. The minister who would dare to reprove one of his rich church-members for avarice and grasping the opportunities of others, would very soon be where he would imagine himself in a lion’s den or a fiery furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated, like the one into which the great plutocrat Nebuchadnezzar cast Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. These wealthy men would consider it as badly out of taste to be reproved as the scribes and Pharisees did the reproofs of the Lord Jesus Christ in condemning them. When the Lord reproved the wealthy Pharisees, His disciples came to Him, saying: “Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?”† So the people of the congregation would run to the good man, chiding him for offending such influential

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\*James v., 1-6. † Math. xv., 12.

members of the Church, and advising him to preach the gospel, and let his church-members' business alone, and those who do so much to keep up the Church.

Every man knows that the desire for one million gratified makes a stronger demand for five millions more. The more he gets, the more selfish and grasping and self-willed his nature becomes. The more he gets, the more overbearing and dictatorial he is. The more he gets, the greater the premium he puts on laziness for his sons, and the larger the prize he puts into his daughter's hand that it may be sought from the love not for her, but for the prize the hand contains. So, when a wealthy man's daughter is married, the newspapers have to assure us it was a love affair, to make us believe it, and we would not then were it not for the immaculate reliability of the press.

Of all creatures, I take it, the devil is the most unhappy and miserable, and next to him, his devils around him; so in the reign of plutocracy, the plutocrat will not only be the most God-forsaken, hard-hearted man, but he will be of all men the most miserable, and his family will come next to him in misery in the hell which he is trying to make out of the earth. God's world is for His children, and He intends that they shall live well and enjoy its good things. Their right to the opportunity to take hold of these temporal blessings is inviolable, and belongs to all alike, and he who takes it from the people is the most damnable thief and robber



the world contains. God, in His wise justice, has so ordained that the man transgressing His holy law shall suffer the deepest blighting of the curse.

The most popular, and the defense considered the most potent for the excuse of great wealth, is that rich men do so much good with their money. This much is true, when a rich man gives away any money, all of the world hears about it. One of our most intelligent and most observing plutocrats, in an address in which he was advocating the advantage of great wealth in the hands of a few men, as conservators of the interests of the poor, said: "For every thousand dollars spent for so-called charity by wealthy men, nine hundred and fifty had better have been thrown into the sea, because it helps to increase the very evil it was intended to cure." And in this estimation and opinion, he said he was supported by one of the most prominent college professors of our land. Now, if there were no other reason why the vineyard should be taken from the rich and given unto other husbandmen, surely this is enough. The record of the common people's benevolence dare not be so impeached by anyone.

As long as men are allowed, and not only allowed to pile up fortunes, but are deified and worshiped as little gods for their success in so doing, they will continue, and the evil results will increase. So long as great fortunes are made and the holders of them are adored, the hearts of energetic men will be fired to emulate their example, and the

intensity of the struggle will continue to engender deceit, over-reaching, unfair dealing and straight-out lying. High honor, strict integrity, brotherly love, will continue to flee away, as a fugitive, before the maddened mania and the increasing, reckless, wild rush for wealth and money.

In the dethronement of wealth and the rich man, we will be met with an argument which will be held as invincible, namely, the great injustice we are doing the wealthy man. Rich men and their friends will oppose us with all the desperation and cunning deceit of Satan's best wits, and with his loudest howlings, when they see we are in earnest in our work. So it was in the days of our Saviour's ministry on earth, when He met those who were possessed, "And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not."\* It is farther said, when the people came to Jesus, "And see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting and clothed, and in his right mind; and they were afraid."† When the ordeal of the rich man letting go of his money is passed, and he sits clothed in brotherly love, and in his right mind, then the people will fear and the God of heaven will be honored.

Have we not been working away at the branches long enough to demonstrate to all that we are making no headway against the vice by trimming

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\*Mark v., 7. †Mark v., 15.

off limbs and leaves? More rapidly than we can trim them off, they grow again. John the Baptist announced Jesus' coming as the laying of the axe at the root of the tree. Why should we attempt to direct the blows of the gospel any longer at the branches, while they are divinely aimed at the root. The fan is in Jesus' hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing floor, and the wheat He will gather into His garner, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.

Why not make the bulls and bears of Wall street, the senators and presidents, the Englishmen trafficking in our dearest interests of life, stop that which is fun for them, but awful cruelty and misery to the masses? There is absolutely no sense in a few men making a foot-ball out of the interests of the people, merely to let them pile up wealth at the expense of poverty, squalor and crime among the many. The time will come when such conduct will be looked upon as worse than slavery, and the man who deals in it worse than the man who hunted and trapped negroes in the woods of Africa, to bring to America as slaves.

In the name of Christianity and brotherly love, what right has one man, or a few men, to sit at the head of large capital and trade, and draw in their thousands and millions, when they who do the work do it for a scanty living, and the difference is due to the fact alone that this one man or few men have managed so as to get the title of the property in their hands? Why, in a free land with equal rights

to life and the pursuit of happiness, should a few have millions poured in upon them at the expense and hard toil of the many? The Golden Rule of the Master, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets,"\* is not a mere flourish of rhetoric, but it is a practical order which must command the business of the world. The apostle puts it, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."† To ask how all this great change, in minutiae, is going to be brought about, is a child's question. No men entering the threshold of a reformation ever saw their path all the way through. They knew right was right and wrong was wrong, and they acted upon this great principle, and trusted to God for the results. To stand counting the dangers to be encountered is the talk and excuse of a coward. When Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh to ask that he would let the people go, they did not know how that great emancipation would be brought about, nor what they afterward would do and become. Pharaoh held title to his property in the flesh of the Hebrew slaves, as indisputably then, as any title rests on property to-day. Moses and Aaron trusted God, and let God direct them, and this is the secret of the power of the movement.

When they went out free, the mountains stood on either side of them, the Red sea in front of them,

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\*Math. vii., 12. †Rom. xv., 1.

and Pharaoh and his hosts behind them ; but God made the sea to divide and the Hebrew slaves went over dry-shod, which Pharaoh and his hosts assaying to do, were drowned in the returning waters of the sea. It has been with every great reformation, and ever will be, that God has led His people out of their house of bondage with a high and an outstretched arm, and in a way they knew not of.

God would have taken those slaves to a land flowing with milk and honey in less than a month, if they had not played the coward. Shall we repeat the folly? The Hebrew slaves would not rise up to throw off their thralldom, till their lives were embittered with sore bondage and their children slain at birth. Shall we, with the history of the nations spread open before us, repeat their follies and not improve by the examples of the past?

## CHAPTER XV.

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### JESUS AND RICH MEN.

**W**HAT God believes man had better believe. “Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”\* The world is slowly, but positively, coming to the conclusion that the teachings of Jesus Christ are truth crystallized in words and sentences. Though His life has been under the microscopes of philosophers and the dissecting knives of critics and scholars for over eighteen hundred years, the answer to the question, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?”† must ever be, No man, Lord. “And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?” must be answered by believing, or stand condemned.

Infidelity has well-nigh laid by the weapons of her rebellion. Her arrows for two thousand years have fallen down broken before the Scriptures, without leaving a dent or scratch upon its sacred page. The charm of disbelief has passed away and lost its power, save in the monstrosity of a few men in the pulpits and the pews, who pose as friends of the Bible, while, at the same time, they endeavor

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\*Math. xi., 27. †John viii., 46.

to deal deadly blows in its back. We do not desire to be discourteous to learned men and honest investigation. We would have as much respect for scholarship and commentators as any man ought to have; but when a man's opinions are squarely across God's revealed truth, we cannot and will not regard him.

"I search in vain," said Napoleon Bonaparte, "in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ, or anything which can approach the gospel. Neither history, nor humanity, nor the ages, nor nature, offer me anything with which I am able to compare it or to explain it. Here everything is extraordinary. The more I consider the gospel, the more I am assured that there is nothing there which is not beyond the march of events, and above the human mind. Every phrase has a sense complete, which traces the perfection of unity, and the profundity of the whole. Book unique! Who but God could produce that type, that idea of perfection, equally exclusive and original? What proof of the divinity of Christ! With an empire so absolute, He has but one single end—the spiritual amelioration of individuals, the purity of the conscience, the union to that which is true, the holiness of the soul."

It is certainly time to quit quarreling with the revealed truth in God's Word, and to stop trying to explain away any of its plain teachings and doctrines; but to take it as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, obeying its commandments and trusting its promises. It is the sheet anchor



of our safety; our guide in time and hope in eternity.

We shall not attempt to name any sum of money necessary for a man to have in order to be called rich. The Bible does not attempt it, and we will leave it, as the Scriptures do, to the intuitions or common understanding of the people. There are concepts which are clear to us and are understood by all alike; yet, when we undertake to harness them up in a definition, we appreciate the fact that language is not a perfect medium for the communication of our thoughts one to another. This much, however, is doubtless true: The industrious, economical man, gathering a competency to provide for his household, and fortify against disease and old age, by honest industry and economy, is not the man whom our Saviour speaks of as being a rich man, and against whom His invectives lie.

When the Saviour unfolded His vivid picture of the world beyond, it was, "The rich man also died and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments."\* The impression is, of course, that this was some rich man whom the world said was wicked. But Jesus did not say so. All we know about this man is what is given in the few verses in this chapter, and that is, he was rich and he went to hell when he died. We protest against any man adding anything to his history, more than what is written; and this protest we make on the authority of John the Revelator, who sealed the New Testa-

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\*Luke xvi., 22, 23.

ment with these words: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."\*

The story goes on and says, "There was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."† The word here translated beggar does not necessarily, in the original Greek, mean beggar, but only a poor man. Here we find no reason given why the beggar or poor man went to heaven, unless his poverty is the reason that Jesus saved him. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is a free gift, and He can bestow it where He chooses. All He permits us here to know of Lazarus is that he was poor and he went to heaven. If the Lord sees fit to equalize things in the next world by giving the poor man credit on account of the sufferings and wrongs which he endured in this life, and charges up condemnation against the rich for the suffering they caused the poor in the world, who has any right to complain; and does it not meet the instincts and emotions the heart often feels?

\*Rev. xxii., 18, 19. †Luke xvi., 20, 21, 22.

The story further says, "And in hell the rich man lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."\* The rich man seems to have been very much surprised to find himself in hell. He probably had been a leader in the temple and Church of God on earth. He was a professed and acknowledged son of Abraham. He appeals to Abraham as father, and Abraham acknowledges him as son.

Abraham, in acknowledging him as son, says: "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."† Here we have Abraham's statement in justifying the actions of God in sending the rich man to hell, while He received the poor man, Lazarus, into heaven. Abraham does not make one reference or insinuation that the rich man had done anything that was looked upon by men as unfitting a man for the kingdom of heaven, or that Lazarus complied with any of the prescribed rules among men which entitle a man to a name among the people of God on earth; but gives as the reason for the condition of these men, that the rich man was rich and had his abundance in this world, while Lazarus was poor and had his penury.

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\* Luke xvi., 23, 24. † Luke xvi., 25.

We know that great riches with the few are always at the expense of great poverty with the many. Now take it that this rich man absorbed a large field of the productive powers of nature, and he, with others like him, tied up the opportunities of the land, and enjoyed them, clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; while Lazarus and his poor fellows were left, as a consequence, in hard poverty. Then every sentence of the history has a meaning, and the story is complete without commentators telling us what Jesus must have meant to say, but did not. This rich man was condemned for his large money-holding, so far as the narrative shows, and without one word being said about how he got his money, or what kind of a character he bore.

But now, did Lazarus get to heaven because he was poor? The sacred page reveals no other reason. It says he was poor and was in heaven, in contrast with the rich man, who was rich and in hell. If it be true that, out of the abundance of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and pity for the poor and wronged, Lazarus, who had been cheated by the rich out of his pleasures of life on earth, was taken to heaven, or Paradise, for this cause, then there is a deeper meaning than is commonly supposed in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He said, "But many that are first shall be last, and the last first."\*

It is certainly true that the poor seemed to enlist

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\*Math. x., 31.

our Saviour's special care, and upon them He bestowed His favors while on earth, and even called them His brethren. James said of them, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised?"\* The poor despised Samaritan, an outcast from the Church on earth, was Jesus' type of a true man—a good neighbor in the kingdom of heaven, or brotherly love, He was establishing on earth.

When the rich man found that his doom was hopelessly fixed, he begged Father Abraham that he would send Lazarus, or someone else from the dead, to tell his five brethren on earth how this matter was, and how it seemed to the disembodied spirits beyond the shore of time. For he had never understood it as he did now, viz., that his riches were costing him his eternal welfare and his never-dying soul. He had been favored all his life, and was in the habit of taking everything which came in his reach for his own, or at least trying it, was remarkably successful in doing so, and he supposed heaven would be no exception to the rule.

But Abraham refused to send anyone to the earth, on the grounds, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."† Moses' law provided for the poor, and had it been obeyed, no monopolies could have grown up in Israel. The minor prophets were one unceasing wail and protest against the rich and their oppression of the

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\*James ii., 5. †Luke xvi., 29.

poor. The people had enough to know it was a sin against God and men to be rich. They had the truth and the evidence; and if they would not read and understand it, it was no fault of God. But the wealthy man thought if somebody would go to the world and tell his five brethren how it was, saying the same words Abraham did, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things," they would know their wealth was damning them, and would give it away, that they might not come to that place of torment. Jesus, who came down from heaven, has told the story for the rich man in hell, and we see that Abraham was correct when he said, "They will not be persuaded though one rose from the dead."\* But this being true as against sinners before Christ, and now, with His wonderfully plain teachings, what will be the condemnation of our wealthy men, and how will they be without excuse at the great bar of God for their sin of wealth? "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing

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\*Luke xvi., 31.

to fall into the hands of the living God.”\* By reading the following verses, it is evident that Paul was addressing men who had once walked in the precepts of the gospel, but now, from the love of their wealth, walked in these ways no more. The rich, who are pampered all the days of their lives on earth, have all their hearts can wish, do as they choose and regard neither God nor man, will doubtless be very much surprised, when they go into eternity, to find that they are lost.

Again we read, “And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zaccheus stood and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house.”†

\* Heb. x., 28-31. † Luke xix, 1-9.



Zaccheus was rich; but we are not permitted to think that he was a dishonest man or even a hard dealer; for in this most solemn hour that had ever come to his soul, when he was elevated to the high plain of his new-found life, and knowing that he was standing in the presence of Him from Whom there is nothing hid, he says, "If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." His words plainly imply that if he had taken anything from anyone by false accusation, he did not know it. The inspired pen records it as if he were correct, or at least makes no comment on it, to give us any authority to infer he might be mistaken.

No matter how honestly he came by his possessions and riches, Zaccheus felt it was inconsistent with the new life on which he was entering to keep the money, and that he would have to part with it; and the only intimation that he kept the half, was that he was ready, if anyone came whom he unwittingly had wronged, to restore him fourfold. When the grace of God enters a man's heart indeed, he cannot hold onto great sums of money, with the poor and needy around him and suffering on every hand. The kingdom of heaven which Jesus Christ came to set up is the kingdom of brotherly love; and the first law of this kingdom is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

The question might arise, Would the Lord have required Zaccheus to give his goods to the poor if he had not proposed to do so himself? To answer

this, let us turn to the tenth chapter of Mark and begin reading at the seventeenth verse, which is: "And when Jesus was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? Jesus said unto him, Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.' '\*

Here is the history of another rich man in the presence of Jesus Christ, and he asks Him the question, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" The manner in which he came—running—denotes the greatest of anxiety. Kneeling before Jesus shows his humility. His question and manner of deportment would make any inference that he was depending on his riches for salvation, or that he, like Naaman, wanted to do some great thing, by which he should be saved, as altogether illogical, and do violence to the sacred narrative. His whole manner gives us the most convinc-

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\* Mark x., 17-22.

ing evidence that he looked upon Jesus as the Messiah, the God-man, the one to be worshiped, and in whose hands were the keys to the knowledge of eternal life. Among all those who ever came to Christ, none ever came in a more suppliant manner, and none, not even the disciples, more clearly confessing the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Further, none ever came to Christ who presented so clean a record and high a character as this young ruler. He had kept all the commandments, and Jesus put the seal on his claim as being an honest statement, and not an empty boast, by His love for him, and that love springing, apparently, out of this very statement. Notice that it was the last half of the decalogue which Jesus repeated to him, the half which refers to men on earth, and that He added an explanation which made the law especially apply to the rich, viz.: Defraud not; but even with this he was free from the law, and his life must have been as Paul's before his conversion, "Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."\*

This is the only recorded instance where Jesus' love went out to a man who was in disobedience to the divine behests. And it was with a heart full of love towards the young ruler that He said, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." The sincere, anxious and humble manner in which the young ruler came to

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\* Phil. iii., 6.

Jesus merited a frank, fair and candid answer. None of all those who came to Christ ever were subjected to so severe an examination; and why all this, unless it be to put it beyond a question that the young man was commanded to give his great possessions to the poor, for no moral defect in his character, except that he owned and held them. The Saviour answered the young ruler clearly, positively, and he had no doubt about the meaning of the answer, nor that his question was fully and fairly answered. The answer was that he could have salvation on the terms of selling all he had and giving it to the poor; that then, and not till then, could he join Jesus' followers; then, and not till he had done so, could he hope for heaven and its joys. He felt that the terms of salvation were too severe, and that he could not comply with them; but was disappointed that he could not have heaven in view and keep his great possessions at the same time. So, he went away sorrowful. But even in this last scene of his life, his nobleness of character is revealed. He recognizes the righteousness of the decision, and, without one murmuring word, goes away. How different from the scribes and Pharisees, who were always carping at Jesus' words and trying to catch Him in His talk.

Doubtless there was no finer man in all Palestine, and it is a question if any in the world ever measured higher in sweetness of deportment and loveliness of character than he. But one thing he lacked

—he had great possessions, and he must sell them and give the proceeds to the poor, before he could be numbered among the children of the kingdom of heaven on earth. When that is done, said Jesus, “Come, take up the cross, and follow me.”

Who will dare to say that if this young ruler had gone and sold all he had and given it to the poor, in obedience to Jesus’ command, he would not have had treasures in heaven, no matter if he had omitted all the conventional ways men have to show the world that they are followers of the great Jehovah.

On the other hand, in the face of this plain, positive narrative, by what authority, we ask, do men offer salvation to wealthy men, and admission to the Church, and almost deify them with the same patronizing sycophancy that the world does?

Some cut the knot by saying that this young ruler was an exception and a special case, and the rule given to him is not applicable to men of great possessions in general. If this is the case, there ought to be some evidence of it on the sacred page; but there is not. How could anything be clearer than that the inspired writer’s intention was to place before the world a man whose character would allow of no such interpretation, and to present it in such a way that he is, unquestionably, the peer of any man in his time, if not of any man the world ever had. The story is bound up, so that it would seem absolutely impossible to get any other conclusion from the narrative, save that the choice

was plainly between the young ruler holding his possessions and being lost, and his giving away his possessions to the poor and having treasures in heaven for evermore. And now, had this young ruler given away his possessions, at Jesus' command, to the poor, would anyone doubt that he was a good man and in heaven to-day, for that obedience; and it is equally true that he is not there, because he did not.

The doctrine is sometimes preached that Jesus demanded the young ruler to give away his possessions, because Jesus wanted his first affection and love. Also, the reason that He demanded him to give them away was on general principles, which would apply to the poor man's spade and the poor woman's washtub, all alike, and the doctrine taught here is that we must merely hold our property, ready to give it up at the Lord's command; and if the rich man, by some indescribable imagination, professes to hold his property in this manner, he may have never so much, yet is living in no violation of God's command.

Now let us apply the rule to other commands of the Master. His plain command was, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor."\* He said to the woman taken in adultery, "Go, and sin no more."† Shall we hold the doctrine that all He meant here was that the woman loved her sins more than she did Him, and He wanted her first affection; and the doctrine as applied to us is not

\*Math. xix., 21. †John viii., 11.

that we are to abstain from immoral conduct, but that while we indulge in adulteries, we must hold them all the time subject to the Lord's command, and ready to give them up if He says so? We must not worship immoralities, for it is the worship of them that is the sin. Aside from our sentiments against immorality, this line of theology could be far more easily established against the woman taken in adultery, than with the young ruler. She showed no signs of a worshipful disposition toward the Master, nor recognition of His divinity, as the young ruler did. In fact, there are stronger reasons why we should adopt this interpretation in her case than in the case of the young ruler. Her occupation was all her living, which Jesus demanded her to give up, and the young ruler was only commanded to give up his luxuries, and would have had as good a living after he had done as Jesus told him, as the common people. There is far more philanthropy and brotherly love in applying this kind of theology to the poor, unfortunate girl, than to the rich man. When she is prosecuted and driven from her sins, she is an outcast, and sore poverty is her lot; but when the wealth is taken away from the plutocrat, he is only relegated, from being a little god over men, to the common walks and life, of the best men in the world. The entire treatment of the woman and her accusers goes to show that there should be a world more of compassion shown to her sinning than to the sins of the rich Pharisees who came to Him accusing her.



Of course, Jesus demanded enough love from the young ruler to cause him to obey His command, and to go his way and sell all his possessions and give to the poor. The young ruler knew Jesus meant exactly what He said, and that no mere pretense or profession of holding his property at Jesus' will would fulfill the command. The truth is of general application, and any man who says he is holding his great wealth subject to Jesus, if sincere, will go his way, sell all he has and give to the poor, and then follow Jesus—a common man, like the young ruler would have been had he joined the number of Jesus' followers when on earth.

Then think of a doctrine which represents Jesus as jealous of the young ruler's riches. Nothing could be farther from His modest, pure life. Jesus never asked a man to do anything for His personal glorification alone. Wherever He commanded men to obey and worship Him, it was for the good of mankind, and to lift them up, by contact with Him, to purer lives of brotherly love and unselfishness. Not even His transcendent merits were once spoken of by Him, as worldly monarchs demand, for their own laudation; but everything He did and said found its sweet effects in the good of men. He emptied Himself of Himself. His life was a life of service and for the good of men, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."\* He left it for men to recognize His

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\*Matt. xx., 28.

worthiness of honor and praise, and render to Him the tribute of affection, prompted freely by their own hearts.

As soon as the young ruler was gone, it is said that "Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples."\* There must have been something remarkable in that look, to cause it to be recorded, and something more than historic curiosity. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."† As Jesus looked round about upon the disciples, He felt how hard it would be for them, and men of all ages, to see the wolf in sheep's clothing, with wool never so fine and so naturally fitting the body that it would be beyond the scrutiny of men to detect the hypocrite by the natural vision, and He knew how slow men would be to accept this divine truth and rule. So He emphasized His actions and former words, saying, "Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?"‡ As if they had thought, If that young ruler cannot be saved, who can? For he is the best man we know anything about, and we would not dare to say that we are as good ourselves. And the world ever since has

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\*Mark x., 23. †2 Tim. iii., 16. ‡Math. xix., 23-25.

sympathized with the disciples in that astonishment. Ministers and commentators have ever felt it necessary to explain away the clear statements of the sacred narrative and its only fair meaning, to protect the Master's good reputation among men.

"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."\* Here is that look again of the Saviour. Never did the Saviour exhibit such solicitude and anxiety that He might be understood, which shows that He was inculcating a great truth, and one hard to be received. Surely, the history of the young ruler is no empty or isolated story, from the great trend of human affairs, that finds no counterpart to-day. The Bible relates not strange stories, but deals in representative men and representative acts, recorded not for our curiosity, but as our examples. When such tenderness is exhibited by the Saviour and recorded by the sacred narrator, does it not emphasize the fact that here is something that will be hard for us to believe. But it is exceedingly important that we should heed the divine revelation, and understand that man's perverted and depraved instincts may be expected to be against it, and that they will try to explain it away.

"With men this is impossible;" that is, if there is such a thing as a rich man being saved, we have nothing to do with it; we cannot even imagine how it is to be done, and it is a very clear state-

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\*Math. xix., 26.

ment for us to let all the doctrine alone of the rich man being saved. This was very politely and tenderly put by the Master to His disciples, but equally as positive.

In Mark's gospel, we find this additional verse that Matthew did not record: "But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"\* This is the passage upon which the whole fabric is built of the theology teaching that the Saviour meant that the only sin in riches was the trusting in them. But the passage does not give relief, and if the Saviour had meant it so, He most signally failed; for, before He said this, it is recorded that "the disciples were astonished;" but immediately after He uttered it, we are told they "were astonished out of measure," for the very next sentence the Saviour spoke was: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."† This statement of the Master puts the salvation of a rich man entirely out of the question.

As we read the passage carefully, we see it is in the nature of a question. It reads: "Children, how hard is it (not how hard it is) for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" Then, if we turn to the Greek, we find the sentence should have the interrogation after it, instead of the exclamation point. The passage is a question

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\* Mark x., 24. † Mark x., 25.

which the Saviour asked His disciples, as if children at school, and answered Himself, saying, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Of course, with God all things are possible; but there is not given us even the hope of the thief, in the record that God ever did so vouchsafe His potent power, or ever will.

But even this plain statement men have tried to explain away. It is said the camel was the great cord, or rope, which the sailors threaded with much difficulty into the eye of the large needle which they used to tack the canvas together. Others said the needle's eye was the low wicket gate under the city's walls, which was so low the camel had to unload, get down on his knees and crawl through. So the rich man had to unload his riches; but men unwarrantedly add from his affections only, and so humbly go into the kingdom of God. Then all that is necessary for the rich man to do is to say, "It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered; and many such like things ye do."\* But even making the wicket gate the needle's eye does not relieve the difficulty, for the man has to unload his riches to get into the kingdom of heaven, and he cannot follow out the habit of the camel; that is, as soon

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\* Mark vii., 11, 13.

as he is inside, load them on again, without making the Saviour to talk nonsense.

But the great difficulty with both the explanations is; they are possible with men, and the Saviour said, With men the salvation of the rich is an impossibility. Of course, the great work of the regeneration of any soul is beyond the comprehension of men; but the fair meaning of the Saviour is that there is something more in trying to save a rich man, and this something more is beyond the ken of human knowledge and revelation. Then, had it been either of these, the disciples would not have been astonished out of measure, for they had doubtless helped to thread the great needle to tack the canvas together, and had seen the camel crawl through under the low gate. If we say Jesus meant the ordinary needle and the two-humped camel, and what He said was, You could easier drive a camel on the desert through a needle's eye than a rich man could get into the kingdom of God; then we see that He used a very strong figure of speech, and kept up the great line of truth He was teaching, namely, that it is impossible for a rich man to enter heaven.

Lest we be considered as implying that there was intentional dishonesty on the part of the commentators in the extraordinary wit and genius shown in their attempts to screen the rich from the plain condemnations of the Saviour, and pry the doors of heaven open to them, we wish to say emphatically that we do not impute bad motives to them



by any means. A very different condition of things confronted them than does us now. The rich, so called, at the time the commentaries were written, were farmers, well-to-do merchants and tradesmen, and there were no poor save the shiftless, the lazy and the drunken. To admit that the blessed Master would condemn the former and compliment and save the latter was too revolting to the common sense of the clergy and scholars. We doubt not that they felt it their Christian duty to explain away these things which, upon the face of them, seemed not only to make the Master teach foolishness, but actually teach a doctrine which seemed to inculcate vices, and was inimical to prosperity. But we to-day are in the midst of the same condition of affairs that the people of Palestine were at the time of our Saviour. The great productive powers of nature then were held in the grasp of wealth as ours are now, and enforced crime and idleness was in Palestine then, as it now is with us.

We must notice that in all the history of rich men who stand out individually in the New Testament, there is not one word on the sacred pages to soil or contaminate their pure character, yet Jesus pronounced condemnation on each one of them. As far as we can see, they were men who had a high moral standing, a clean moral character and a name among the people of God at that day. Doubtless Jesus condemned immoral and openly profane rich men also, and indeed, we have the



evidence in general characters that He did. Why none of them stand out individually on the sacred page is not without deep meaning. The meaning evidently is that the sin Jesus wished to show the world He was condemning so bitterly, and above all others, was not immorality, drunkenness or larceny, but the sin of great wealth. This is clear from the fact that there is not the smell of fire of any sin on the garments of these condemned men, save that of their riches.

We have half a dozen plutocrats whose unnecessary millions, or even their income for one year, would have purchased clothing and food enough to have relieved the entire sufferings of the Armenians during the last year. Added to this, the money expended would have taken up the oversupply of goods on our markets, which would have started our factories that now are idle; farmers would have been enabled by the revival in the grain and meat trade to have paid the interest on their mortgages and perhaps reduced the mortgages, in consequence of their good acts, and prosperity would smile upon our land.

These plutocrats could have felt a thousand times happier, but they would not so view it, and in fact, they were so blind in selfishness that they could not.

Jesus asked His disciples, "How much then is a man better than a sheep?"\* David, viewing the consideration and care which God seemed to bestow upon man, said, "What is man, that thou art

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\*Math. xii., 12.

mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour?"\* Aye, man is in the image of God, the former of the worlds and all that is. He is the heir apparent to the divine glories of heaven eternally. Shall man, so made, so inheriting, have no more care than a sheep, his life and happiness counted out against such corruptible things as gold and silver? How long, O Lord, how long shall these things be?

Among the seven churches revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos, as representing the churches in the world, it was of the Church of Laodicea that God said, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."† A wealthy Church of lukewarm members is the hardest problem that ever confronted the true minister of Jesus Christ. If they were outrageously wicked—drunkards, and a set of outlaws—he would know what to do; but these lukewarm aristocrats, what can he do with them? God says He will spew them out of His mouth. He would rather have a Church of desperadoes than such men. Jesus, in His opening inaugural address, said, "Woe unto you that are rich! For ye have received your consolation."‡

\*Ps. viii., 4, 5. †Rev. iii., 15-17. ‡Luke vi., 24-26.

That is, they could expect none of the consolations of heaven, and the seeing of joy and peace, as He had promised to the poor. They had taken more than was theirs on earth, and that was enough to make them unworthy of heaven's society of brotherly love. "Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets."

The rich are full now, but the time will come when they shall feel every gnawing in hell which their riches have caused the poor on earth to suffer. For every laugh and exultant joy they feel over their riches, they shall mourn and weep in hell. Job said, "If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above."\* Our rich men may seem pious and good, and all men speak well of them; so they did of the scribes and Pharisees, and never were men so highly rated for clear religious characters as they, and they who dogged the steps of Jesus, and crucified the Redeemer, because His works were righteous and theirs evil. Men never more rigidly observed all Church ecclesiasticisms than these, but Jesus' way is, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."† These

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\*Job xxxi., 25-28. †John vii., 24.

were they "which glory in appearance and not in heart."\*

"Jesus went into the temple and found those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting; and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."† "Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."‡

From Jesus' first sermon up in Nazareth and His inaugural address on the mount, announcing His mission as brotherly love to the common people and blessings on the poor, His ministry was a rising climax of condemnation against the rich, and a gathering storm, till it burst in most terrific fury upon the heads of the scribes and Pharisees, in His last public address in the temple. The quiet serenity of His mild, sweet deportment was never broken, except when He met the rich and attacked them for their lives of sin. The two recorded great outbursts of His righteous indignation were both in the temple of God, and against those who claimed to be, and were recognized by the people as, the sons of God. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God."||

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\*2 Cor. v., 12 †John ii., 14-16. ‡Mark xi., 17. §1 Peter iv., 17.

## CHAPTER XVI.

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THE SCRIBES, THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.

THE Saviour's spirit of meekness and gentleness, in judging of others, and His abstinence from the imputation of improper motives, was one of the most characteristic and original charms of His life and precepts. Though He met the drunkard staggering along the street and wayside, as we do now, there is not left us one harsh word that He uttered against him, nor a condemning sentence which fell from His lips. He met the harlot, and spoke to her words of hope and forgiveness. Her soul lit up with heaven's aspirations in His presence and she received peace and pardon at His hands.

Yet, when He met the scribes, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the deep fountain of heaven's wrath broke up and was poured out upon them. He denounced the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees in the bitterest language and with the most sweeping charges of being hypocrites and robbers, oppressors and vipers. His ministry was a warfare against them. He refused to offer them pardon and salvation. His entire teachings and attitude towards them were repellant and antagonistic.

When John the Baptist, Jesus' forerunner, was

preaching at the Jordan in the wilderness, and his work had risen to take on large proportions, these Sadducees and Pharisees went down to the Jordan to look it over, while the scribes, zealous for the dogma that Jerusalem was the place where men ought to worship, did not go. The wide-awake dealers, the Sadducees and Pharisees, however, were not to be kept back from getting hold of a good thing by any religious scruples, so they went down to John's baptism. If there was money in it, or if it was going to give them popularity and a greater hold on the masses, they were going to have it. Such men will play pious, be smooth and sanctimonious as deacons, to succeed in business. But John cried to them, and said: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"\* Plainly implying that whoever had, it was a mistake, for their doom was already fixed beyond the hope of mercy or pardon. He further told them: "Now also the axe is laid unto the root of the tree. Therefore, every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."† They very well knew that he meant they were the evil trees, and doubtless went away offended, never to return.

A correct knowledge, therefore, of these scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, is of very great importance in getting hold of the true genius of Christianity. If we can define the grounds of Jesus

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\* Math. iii., 7. † Math. iii., 10

Christ's attack upon these men, we have laid open the master evil and the taproot sin in the world.

The scribes were originally merely writers or copyists of the law, who followed this business for a mode of livelihood. In their anxiety to preserve the text of holy writ and guard it against any interpolations or corruptions, they counted the letters of the Scriptures and classified every precept of the law. Their position and ability to read and write naturally brought them into the position of interpreters and expounders of the Scriptures. They read the law before the people on stated occasions, they propounded the duties inculcated in the Scriptures to the people at large on the Sabbath, and instructed young men in the Scriptures and theology in the colleges or seminaries on the week days. Their great reverence for the divine law, their extraordinary modesty and humility, as well as their fear lest any of their writings should be raised to the dignity of holy writ, prevented the scribes, or sophrim, from embodying their expositions and enactments in separate treatises.

In time, this original modesty wore away. The office of the sophrim was elevated to doctor, and the scribes received large salaries for their position and profession. They taxed the poor heavily. We have an instance on the sacred page where they induced or compelled a poor widow to cast in all her living for their support. These doctors canonized the opinion of the scribes, which it was claimed had been transmitted orally. They elevated these



sayings of the scribes, or the tradition of the elders, above the inspired word, and held it to be a greater offence and more punishable to violate them than to break high commandments of heaven. Jesus brought against them the charge, "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."\* Again, "And ye have not his word abiding in you."† They were intense lovers of Churchisms. Duty and service was lost sight of, and a selfish ambition controlled them. Piety and high integrity went for little or nothing. Brains and the ability to succeed overtopped every virtue and excused all selfish actions. If a man was outwardly moral, if he conformed to the rules and notions of society, the popular reform, no matter how extreme or wide from the real spirit of God's law, mercy, justice and love to God and man, they held him blameless. So Jesus' command to them was, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."‡

A priest must remain in obscurity unless he joined the order of the scribes. "They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."§ They had the clerical degree of Rab, Rabbi and Rabban, corresponding in a measure to our D.D., L.L.D., Very Reverend, Right Reverend, Honorable, Judge, Senator, etc.

\*Math. xv., 6. †John v., 38. ‡John v., 39. §Math. xxiii., 6, 7.

But there were honest scribes; men who would not permit themselves to be the tools of the rich and powerful to oppress the poor, neither would they use their position to take advantage of the weaker. Paul was a lawyer before his conversion and as touching the law was blameless. He must have been a large-hearted, honest attorney before his conversion, to develop into so self-sacrificing a hero for Jesus and His cause. Zenas was a good lawyer, or scribe, whom Paul wrote to Titus to bring with him in company with Apollos, when he came to him. The Saviour spoke of good scribes when He said, "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill, and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city." It is recorded of Jesus, "The people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

The Sadducees were the irreligious, wealthy, aristocratic class of the Jews. The Sadducees and the Pharisees were the two great contending parties in the Jewish Theocracy at the time of Christ. The character which marked out and separated the Sadducees from the Pharisees was that the Sadducees rejected the authority of the tradition of the elders, they denied the immortality of the soul, future retribution, the existence of spirits or angels; all they took account of, or had concern for, was the present life. They were sceptics, or atheists, or

anything else which was not religious. They strove to secularize the Jewish religion. They sacrificed the national rights for the sake of a peaceful possession of lucrative offices.

And now, who were the Pharisees? The Pharisees were a sect or party among the Jews, who were so called from the Aramaic word, "Perishim," meaning separated. They were essentially the same as the Assideans, meaning godly men or saints, as spoken of in the Maccabees. Josephus, who lived just after Jesus Christ, and was a Pharisee himself, says, The Pharisees lived frugally, and were in no respect given to luxury. In the time of Christ, the Pharisees were very numerous, and were the most wealthy sect of the Jews. They had a majority in the Sanhedrim, and held almost supreme control of the country. They were proud, self-righteous, and held the common people in great disrespect. They were perfectionists, prohibitionists and men of unblemished moral character. They gave the tenth of all their income to the Lord, even of the garden truck—anise, mint and cummin. When the young ruler came to Christ, with a very reasonable assurance he asked, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? When Jesus repeated to him the last half of the decalogue, he truthfully answered, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? And he and everybody supposed the answer would come, Well done, good and faithful servant. The Pharisee who stood and prayed, "God, I thank Thee that I am not

as other men are, even as this poor publican," doubtless told the exact truth about himself, and doubtless there was not a man who knew him, even the best, who could bring aught against his clean character. Paul said of himself, before his conversion, that he was a "Pharisee of the Pharisees, as touching the law blameless."

But when Jesus met these reputable men, He confronted them with the sweeping charge that harlots and publicans would go into the kingdom of God before them. The publicans were the saloon-keepers at that time. He hurled against these religious and wealthy men the most eloquent, the most terrible, the most appalling of all discourses ever delivered to mortals. The temple never rang with voice and words charged with such terror, such faithful reproof, such profound knowledge of the workings of hypocrisy, or such skill in the detection of the concealment of sin, as when the sympathizing Jesus, the friend of sinners, uttered, against these leading members of the visible Church of the most high God, that which is recorded in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew's gospel. But this was the last of Jesus' public discourses, and He well knew that to so oppose these men would cost Him His life, and referred to it before He finished speaking. He also knew if He did not confront these men, or they did not heed His warning and desist from their ways, they would bring such sorrow, ruin and disaster upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that language would be too weak to describe. But He

knew they would not heed His words, and closed by telling them of the coming destruction of Jerusalem, saying, Behold, your house is left unto you desolate! Oh, that ye had known this the day of your visitation! Instead of listening to the admonition and heeding the warning of the God of heaven incarnate, it only served to make them angry. Their wrath broke forth in wildest fury, and it was only a few days after this, that these scribes and Pharisees were before Herod and Pilate demanding the blood and life of Jesus. Think of it! The priests and elders of the visible Church of God demanding the life, and crying for the blood, of the Son of God, while a non-professing and heathen judge pleads for His innocence and begs for His safety and release!

Pilate doubtless looked upon these men as religious, and, consequently, took them to be honest. So he stated to them that, upon the authority of his office, he had thoroughly examined Jesus, and found no fault in Him at all. Then, with Roman strategy, he decided to give them the choice between Jesus and Barabbas, who was a robber, thinking that his diplomacy left them without any choice whatever; for they, being honest and religious men, would have to let the innocent Jesus go and could not ask the release of the robber. But, as many a one since, who has put confidence in a man because he stood high officially in the Church, has found, when these men see there is great gain in dishonesty and wickedness, under heavy pressure,

the cloak of profession is rent from top to bottom and the hypocrite exposed. So Pilate was, no doubt, greatly surprised to find the men still crying out, Crucify Him, crucify Him, and, to his greater astonishment, adding, and let Barabbas go. Pilate shouted out in his surprise: Why, what evil has He done? But his voice was drowned in the clamor. Crucify Him, crucify Him, and Pilate could argue it no further with them. Pilate, evidently thinking: If these men have no consciences, I have; I am afraid to be one of them, and, being nervous, excitable and bewildered, took a basin of water and began to wash his hands. The strange conduct arrested the crowd's attention, and, when the noise of their clamor had died down a little, then Pilate again shouted out: See ye to it; I am innocent of this just man's blood. Undauntedly they answer: Let His blood be on us and on our children. It were bad enough to defy the judgments of heaven and bid them come upon themselves; but what unbridled madness to invite the curse upon their children. There is very ancient and high authority for the statement that when an elder or a deacon of the Church goes into dishonest dealings, he breaks the record of all non-professors, infidels and atheists. So these men demanded the release, and obtained it, of a highway robber, and crucified Jesus, the hope of Israel, the son of David. It is a fact that Jesus Christ was not crucified by a band of toughs, nor by harlots, nor by a drunken mob, nor by a set of infidels, nor by the common



people, but by the wealthy aristocrats of the Church and society. If it be said that John the Baptist was beheaded because he reproved lust, it may be answered that it was lust in high places, and not of the poor; and it is equally true that Jesus Christ was crucified because He reproved the wealthy Churchmembers and other wealthy men for their sins of money-getting and holding. James closes his strictures against the rich by saying, as the climax of his charge, "Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you."

Now, what made the Lamb of God, the mild and tender, sympathizing Jesus, to whom women brought their little children that He might put His hands upon them and bless them, so attack, so scourge and so condemn these leading men of Jehovah's chosen people? What sin were they guilty of that called forth words so scathing or epithets so ignominious and opprobrious? What sin was these learned scribes and wealthy Pharisees entertaining in their hearts, which made them so blind they could not recognize their promised and anxiously long-looked-for Messiah, when the common people and the harlots and saloon-keepers acknowledged His divinity; when Pilate's wife sent word to her husband, the morning before the crucifixion, Have nothing to do with that just man; when Judas brought back the money and said, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood; when even the devils who met Him cried out, I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of



God? What sin was it which held men so supremely in its grasp that when they were reproved by the tender, divine lips of Jesus, they heeded it not, but were stirred up to wrath which nothing short of the blood of the Son of God and the sacrifice of His life would satisfy? If we define and expose the sin, or this power to make men sin, we have the devil's master-key or combination with which he unlocks the human heart to its inmost cell and robs a man of all that is godly and good, and makes him thoroughly depraved, wicked, devilish, and beyond the reach of hope or God's mercy. Here is the sin of all sins; sin in its deepest dye, and the opposite virtue is the cardinal element of a true Christian life.

## CHAPTER XVII.

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### THE GREATEST SIN AND GREATEST SINNERS.

**I**N order that we may find out what the Master regarded as the greatest sin, and who are the greatest sinners, let us approach the question without prejudice, and, as little children, follow His teachings; that we may enter into the kingdom of truth and more fully recognize the kingdom of heaven which He came to establish and set up on earth.

In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, we find the most extended, specific and severe of all the recorded denunciations by our Saviour, of men. He rolled over the guilty heads of the scribes and Pharisees, crash on crash, the thunder of His utter condemnations.

In this chapter, we notice there is no mention made of the Sadducees. The reason probably in part is, the address being delivered in the temple, they were not present. But the Sadducees were wealthy and oppressed the poor equally with the Pharisees. On other occasions, Jesus classed the Sadducees with the Pharisees and condemned them alike, and warned His disciples to beware of the leaven of the Sadducees and Pharisees. Another

reason for the omission of the Sadducees here is that they wore the cloak of honest men and good citizens, while the scribes and Pharisees wore the cloak of religion, to cover up their selfishness and under which to practice their oppressions.

Nothing in the Saviour's utterances nor in literature surpasses or equals in condemnation His denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, as recorded in this chapter. Further, this chapter, containing the events which were the immediate cause of the crucifixion and death of our Redeemer, fills not only an important place in revelation, but must be an essential part of the polity of Christianity. Its features are too prominent, its character too emphatic and unique, and the consequences following it, too great, to pass it over in silence or explain away or minify its teachings.

No real good has ever come from going to the Scriptures with preconceived ideas and theories, picking out isolated passages to establish them and explaining away the plain meaning of others, merely because they do not suit our tooth and humor. What the Scriptures do say and what the Scriptures teach is the only safe guide men have to follow.

Some have ventured to account for the remarkable severity of the tone of this chapter by saying that it was a burst of undignified disappointment and unreasonable wrath. Yet is sin never to be rebuked? Is hypocrisy never to be unmasked? Is moral indignation no necessary part of the noble soul? Is

there no time in human affairs when love would play her part in vain, and justice must leap upon the stage of action? There is no love in cowardice, and where heroism is demanded, cowardice is of all things the most contemptible.

Terrible as the words of this chapter may seem, they are not words of vindictive, ill-timed wrath or heated rage, but they are the cool, calm, well-aimed artillery at the strongest ramparts of sin, by the omniscient, omnipotent hands of God, dictated by justice and holy, self-sacrificing love for those who were oppressed and unable to defend themselves from wrong. Jesus' doctrine of unity, and the absolute brotherhood of the whole human family, came in sharp contrast with the narrow bigotry of the Jews, who held that they were righteous, and despised others. This was the secret of the constant carping against Him, and in this chapter their sins at length are laid open as nowhere else.

The chapter opens with the Saviour giving His disciples a description of the scribes and Pharisees, saying, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the

borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."

Their commandments must have been primarily, and in the main, wholesome, or Jesus would not have enjoined upon His disciples obedience to them. But while the scribes and Pharisees were good at giving advice and wholesome instruction to the poor, they did not do as they taught. They expounded the law to be heard of men and to catch the ears of the influential and wealthy. Their reputation and the holding of their positions, regardless of truth and the souls of men who were committed to their care, was what determined their actions and words. Their aim was to be popular, hold good positions in the Church and state, be great men, wear fine, gaudy clothing, instead of a life of trust and service to their fellow-men; and this they did while they sat in Moses' seat, the meekest and most unselfish of the fathers. To all this the Saviour gave the antidote, "But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

They covered up all their selfishness, self-serving pride and vanity, with a profession of religion, which constituted and made them hypocrites. By the way, the certain ear-mark of the hypocritical

Pharisee or Sadducee is that all he does is to be seen of men. You may depend upon it that these men will give where it will be heard of and appreciated by the popular class of people. The dark alleys and lanes, where there is no one to sound the trumpet of their alms-giving, will witness very little, if any, of their beneficence.

At this point, the Saviour turned from talking to His disciples and spoke directly to the scribes and Pharisees, saying: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

The kingdom of heaven referred to here is evidently the kingdom of heaven, or brotherly love, which John announced that Jesus would set up on the earth. The scribes and Pharisees were men of influence and of trust. By their selfish conduct they caused many others, in imitation of them, to lead lives of selfishness, too. They taxed the people, laying heavy burdens upon men's shoulders grievous to be borne, while they dodged the taxes and did not pay the part of them which would correspond to the touching of them with their little finger. Standing in the place of God and in the name of law, they grasped and held under their control the productive powers of Palestine; they made life hard for the poor, and drove them into sin and sinning while earning their daily bread and clothing, when God had made Palestine to flow with milk

and honey. These men stood as the ostensible exponents of God, the Jehovah, while their lives were such that the inner conscience within the poor told them that these men could not be of the true God, and so they inferred that the temple was not the house of the Great and Holy One. There was naught left for the common people but to turn their backs on the temple of Jehovah, and they were as sheep scattered abroad on the fields of sin, having no shepherd.

The inconsistencies of the professed followers of Jesus Christ have done His cause a hundred times more harm than all the infidels, atheists and agnostics combined. They not only do not go in themselves, but they shut up the kingdom of heaven against those who would have entered in, had it not been for them.

Jesus further says: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."

The scribes and Pharisees robbed widows' houses, which evidently refers to all kinds of oppression of the poor and lowly, and this they did under law and under the cover of religion also. This would not have been possible had they not practically pushed the Bible aside with their teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. Their robbery was not only unreprieved by law, but sanctioned, and, what is more, by their religion, and they covered up their deceit from the eyes of men by their



long prayers. In their prayers, they confessed the superiority of God over them, while they obeyed only the selfish emotions of their hearts. But there is no pretense in the hypocrite which looks so much like true religion as prayer, and from its sacredness, few would dare to criticise, challenge or suspect. Their prayers looked indeed like worship, and everybody thought they were worship, for there is no cloak so finely woven and divinely fitting, that the hypocrite can put on, as the cloak of prayer. Therefore, they shall receive the greater damnation.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves.”

To be made twice as bad as the scribes and Pharisees in the sight of God would be quite impossible. So it must be that they were made to be apparently more heartless in their exactions from those under their power and more rude and offensive in their manner of executing it.

Wealthy men who have a polished, sleek way of doing things, employ others to carry out their cruel plans and do their wicked work for them. And it is a fact that these men, in the employ of the wealthy, though poor themselves, will often treat their fellow-poor more cruelly than the plutocrat himself would dare to do, will be more outspoken and take stronger grounds in the defence of excusing the greed and selfishness of the plutocrat, than he himself would risk his reputation in doing.

Young men come in from the farms, who have been taught by their fathers that honesty is to be sought above all things and the house of God is the sure anchorage for a young man's safety. The young men go to church, see the leaders in the Church, and then watch them in the transaction of their business during the week; they see their greed, deceit, overreaching, in fact, downright dishonesty, and come to the conclusion that the honesty of their fathers is old-fashioned and countrified. They came to the city to keep up with the city life. They have been taught that they will be in the right path so long as they follow the leaders of the Church. They listen to sermons from prominent clergymen, who are zealous to have a large following and be popular with all men. These sermons are sometimes on the prominent men of our day and how they came by success. They tell the congregation that most of these men respect the Church, and some of the most successful and wealthy are among the leaders of our Churches, reputedly benevolent. The inference is fairly drawn that these wealthy men are aided by their attachment or relation to the Church, and that this relation is praiseworthy and blessed of God. These young men have been taught by their mothers to heed the words of him who stands at the sacred desk. But they know all fortunes are the result of large deceit, intense selfishness, overreaching and often sleek lying. The examples of professed Christians they have before them are men not with

the integrity of their fathers, but men who make dollars where their fathers made cents. Their young hearts, on fire with the ambition of youth, desire to succeed. They lay aside their father's idea of integrity, divorce themselves from their mother's prayers, plunge into the stream of business, lay conscience away, ignore brotherly love as a thing a successful man must steel his heart against, and so go on, till they become twofold more the child of hell than those who led them astray.

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?"

There is no intimation in sacred writ why the scribes and Pharisees made this distinction between the temple and the gold of the temple, and the commentators do not seem to know either. This much is true, however: they showed their ardent love for gold, not only gold as a synonym for great wealth, but also gold itself. Gold always has been and is the wealthy man's money. Gold certificates are issued in large denominations; the poor seldom see them and very seldom, if ever at all, own them. Gold and the money power seem linked together. Gold seems to have a kingly power over money-loving men. Gold is the synonym of wealth, greatness and power, as it is the king of all metals,

and is now made the measure of value. It is not improbable that these scribes and Pharisees had this same instinctive love for gold, and their affection became so strong that it turned into the worship of it. It is worthy of more than a passing notice that Jesus Christ was sold in His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, and not gold. Silver is the money of the poor or common people. They see it. They own it. When it is plentiful, they have good times, and when it is scarce, the times have been and are hard. Jesus being the poor and common people's friend, it was appropriate that He should be sold for silver, and not gold. However, in His death, He made His grave with the rich, for the power of that death and the merits of the blood shed on Calvary shall triumph over the powers of wealth and money, and lay the giant of selfishness low at the feet of brotherly love and good-will to all men.

The Saviour immediately adds, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

The ancient Pharisee gave the tenth of all his income to the Lord, according to the law of Moses. He prayed three times a day, morning, noon and night. If he thought his voice was not strong enough to be heard over a sufficiently large circle of people, he took a trumpet and sounded it out, so that no sinner in all Jerusalem might fail to know

that he was one who lived up to all the rules the Church or society required of a Church member. He was never ashamed for it to be known that he was a son of Abraham, and that he worshiped the God of Abraham and of Isaac and Jacob. In all this they appeared very sincere, devout and honest, as worship was conducted in those days; but they, in fact, did it only to be seen of men.

It was right for them to give the tenth of their income to the Lord, and to acknowledge Him in public worship; but they omitted the weightier matters of the law, mercy, justice and faith in God, and their only motive was selfishness.

The modern Pharisee omits the trumpet and ostentation and show of his religion, for that would condemn him at once; but quietly and with an assumed modesty outwits the ancient Pharisee, in that, while he gives only from one, two or three per cent. of his income, the press and clergy blow the trumpet for him. Suppose the wealthy people of our Churches would determine to give the tenth of their incomes to the Church; the news would be sounded from Maine to California, from the lakes to the gulf, that these wealthy men had their pocketbooks converted as well as their hearts.

"Ye blind guides," Jesus farther says, "which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." They scrupulously, conscientiously observed all the formalities of a religious life, as the society of that day demanded, but they lived in disregard of the great law of brotherly love. They strained at little things,

while they swallowed the greatest of all sins, selfishness, which led them to wrest from the avenues of trade the powers of the country, and left the common people in poverty and many of them beggars.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!” Jesus continues, “for you make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee! cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.” The outward deportment of the Pharisee must have been considered all right, and he doubtless was looked upon as a model for that day. There was no appearance of ostentation and show of religious worship to the men of his time in his trumpet and long prayers; but they were probably looked upon as high devotion and merit, or the Saviour would not have said that they made the outside of the cup and platter clean. Their extortion and excess was a revelation to the men of that day. The people thought the Pharisees had a right to all they had, for they had gotten it without violating either the laws of the state or of society, so far as the people knew. Then it seemed they did so much good with their money. They gave the tenth to the Lord, and they were such an important factor both in the Church and state, that it seemed they could not get along without them. They surely had a right to the money and wealth they got, and anybody who had sense enough and the chance to

do the same thing, would have done it, and the Saviour seemed to be entirely out of place in His denunciations. But it is not a fact that riches are the product of superior talents in him who becomes wealthy over him who does not, neither are they altogether the result of exceptional opportunities, which only come to the rich. Of course, there are such things as great opportunities coming to some men which do not cross the path of all. But fortune, as a rule, comes to him who has a strong nature and whose soul is a loadstone charged with the magnetic power of selfishness, drawing every dollar toward him that comes within his influence, and never letting a dollar leave him, unless there is a mortgage on it, and pledged to return, bringing another back with it.

Every vantage-ground gained in fortune-making lifts a man to an elevation where new opportunities rise before his vision and multiply, while it also gives him the power to command and cultivate his increasing privileges. Men of greater talents, but higher honor and greater brotherly love, because they consider the welfare of others, never get the start in the way of money-making, and so it is true that the great opportunities, which made the rich man richer, never come to them. They live and die with nothing more than a competency, but they have kind hearts, and the world is no less happy, but better, for their living in it.

Our Saviour's condemnation against sinners rose to its zenith when He said, "Woe unto you, scribes



and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

What is purer than marble? It is odorless and tasteless, and polishes without sign of scratch or blemish. With it we mark the final resting-place of our dead, as the emblem of the purity in which we hold their sacred memory, and upon it we write their names and inscribe their virtues.

Had these men been violators of the law, or in any way crooked in their dealings, Jesus never could have likened them to whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful. Whited sepulchers would seem to be enough to represent the spotless character of any man, but when He adds, which indeed appear beautiful, He puts it beyond a doubt that there was no blemish of wrong-dealing or immorality in the character of the scribes and Pharisees in the eyes of the people of their day. Doubtless, when a man dealt with them, he got what was coming to him by law, even to the last penny.

The Pharisee had not a hard face, nor the conduct nor reputation of a miser, money-shark, or oppressor of the poor. His demeanor, or face, so far as he could control it, was that of a model man. He was one with a smooth outside, playing the *role* of an honest, generous man, while he was selfish and dishonest at heart. To all that human

eye could see, there was nothing which would call for criticism, but a great deal which would naturally enlist commendation and praise.

Had their language been threatening and their countenance hard, their appearance, it is true, would have been more repulsive, but they would have had the virtue of being consistent. The outside would have been a correct index of what was within, and not a snare, a delusion, and a lie. The sleek man is much the more dangerous. When an honest, generous-appearing outside covers up selfishness and insincerity, whether on a professor of religion or not, his outside is a lie; but when this outside is in the appearance of religion, the deception is in the worst form, and the higher the polish, the more damning the influence on mankind. This was the character of the scribes and Pharisees. He who sees the hearts of men said their hearts were as if filled with dead men's bones and all uncleanness. The stench of human decaying flesh is surely bad enough, but when to it is added "and all uncleanness," it is beyond a question that the sin of these men was the worst of all sins, and they were of all men the worst sinners. The sin is the gaining and holding of great wealth, and doing it under the cloak of Christianity, which is brotherly love. The sin of the selfishness of wealth is bad enough, but when the livery of heaven is stolen to cover it up, it is sin in its deepest dye; for it is wearing the kingly garments of heaven to de-

ceive the people and better serve the devil and hell.

The world, by unanimous consent, gives the verdict that honesty and religion go together. No matter how often men may be fooled and deceived by hypocrites, nevertheless, they will, like Pilate, think those standing high in the Church can be trusted to do the right thing. It is readily seen there is no combination in human nature so well adapted to fortune-making as a strong, selfish nature, nicely covered up under a profession of religion. In these days of the great opening resources of nature's productive powers, there are large facilities for fortune-gathering, and men of good reputation, by taking advantage of the confidence which is accorded to them, through insincerity, falsehood and deception in dealing, can run up to fortune like magic. It seems men will not divorce religion from all that is lovely, generous, kind and honest. There is nothing which has so strong a hold on the human heart as the idea of the purity of religion, and respect for those seeming to possess it is an inevitable consequence.

The disciples had often been annoyed with Jesus attacking and condemning the scribes and Pharisees; but when it came to this last discourse and sweeping charge made against them in the temple, the disciples were doubtless dazed and astonished out of measure. The hour had come when, if they held to their Master, they must part from the honored leaders of the Church who sat in Moses' seat,

and through whom they had been taught to worship God. And we need not be surprised, after this, to read that when the mob seized Him and carried Him away, the disciples all forsook Him and fled. It is hardly possible to see how these disciples could help wondering if their Master had not lost His temper when so attacking these men, and they must have felt He was acting imprudently, and needlessly endangering His own life and theirs. Jesus died, the object of the wrath of the scribes, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the contempt of the nation, denied and deserted by His own disciples.

There is a singular touch in the history, of Joseph of Arimathea, who was rich, coming to Pilate and craving the body of Jesus, while the disciples all forsook the lifeless form and fled. The sentiment probably was overwhelming in Jerusalem that Jesus' conduct in so condemning these scribes and Pharisees was not only imprudent and in bad taste, but was wild, fanatical, uncalled-for, and many considered He had brought His own death upon Himself, and it was a righteous condemnation. Joseph's better sentiment of honor and brotherly feeling had not yet been destroyed by selfishness, and he could still feel the divine pulse of love for truth. He had been behind the screen of business affairs, and knew the make-up of the wealthy Pharisees, the pride and the insincerity of the scribes, and he knew that Jesus was right in His

condemnations of them, and that it was for envy that they crucified Him.

Shakespeare, in his "Merchant of Venice," makes Shylock hard-hearted in demanding the pound of flesh, and Edwin Booth rightly represented him with a harsh voice and a hard face. Neither of these are to blame, for this has always been the world's conception of the oppressor by money of the poor and weak. Even with the twenty-third chapter of Matthew before us, our artists have painted the face of the Pharisee with hard lines, showing his greed.

It was left for Jesus alone to reveal the fact that the man with a sweet countenance and pious ways may be selfish, greedy and grasping at heart; that an outward religious appearance, which bespeaks everything that is pure, honest, generous, kind and trustworthy, may have hidden under it and covered up, iniquity in the dark. The lesson has been so hard for the world to learn, that eighteen hundred years have passed away and we have not yet fully grasped the thought and comprehended the Master's apparent great paradox among men.

And though we are confronted to-day with the same kind of men, and the masses suffering more or less from their aggressions, and all are threatened, yet we hesitate to accept the only conclusion that can be drawn from the Saviour's words and conduct, namely, that selfishness is the taproot sin in the world, and he who is controlled by selfishness and acts under a profession of brotherly love or Chris-

tianity, is the greatest sinner among men, and is a contradiction of all that is godlike in humanity.

With all Jesus' own plain exposition of this fact, men outside the Church wonder if Christianity can be the true religion, while such hypocrites are in the Church. Further, and on the other side, the people and ministers fear to attack men whose moral characters are clean, men clean before the law of the land and society, no matter how great the evidence of their selfishness and greed is in holding needless thousands and grasping for more, while hundreds starve and suffer for want of this same power of money.

The great fundamental law of heaven and the law for earth is brotherly love. There is no influence so destructive to good morals as selfishness, gathering in wealth and covering up its workings with a profession of Christianity. Selfishness strikes the heart of all which we hope for in the millennium.

The influence of these Pharisees is to break the great law of belief in Christianity and even religion itself, and to destroy all confidence and trust in humanity by their deception. The more honest a man is, the more childlike his trust and faith in God and his Redeemer. The more simple and childlike a man's belief in God and Jesus Christ, the less suspicious he is apt to be of his fellow-men, and especially of those who are of the household of faith; but when such a one is deceived, and by one whom he trusted as having the image of God on

his forehead, his faith is worse shattered and the wreck of his confidence is the greatest of all men.

In the wake of every great fortune made or held, especially by professors of Christianity, if the whole truth were known as it is to God, there is not only poverty, but a wrecking of confidence, both in Christianity and in humanity. These wrecked men turn upon others as if to assuage their own wrongs, deceive, defraud and imitate the sleek hypocrites who made them to sin, become twofold more the child of hell, and a cause to make others sin. Woe unto you that are rich! The rich cause men to sin. They stand in high places and send out large circles of influence that leaven every part of society and the business world with selfishness and deceit.

Business is fast approaching the law of the survival of the fittest, or in other words, the customs and habits of the pre-Adamic animals, according to Darwin; and of all these modern destructive creatures, the whited sepulcher is the king of beasts, lying in the ambush of Christianity or brotherly love, on the elevation of wealth and power, sending out befooled religious men and women as jackals to run in his prey.

“Brethren, we have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of



another." Confidence among men is the bond which holds society together and makes commerce possible. As the earth is held together by the law of gravitation and attraction, and were this law suspended, would fly into a thousand fragments, as asteroids, so society, where confidence is not, is a disintegrated mass. The more intelligent the people, the more active the repellant forces and the more destructive they will be. The power of knowledge, if confidence is gone, will only be a power to destroy. While the masses are blinded in ignorance and sunken in debauchery, and their attention taken up with their vices, they may never learn their rights, nor know their wrongs, nor resist their oppressors. But a free government is a government by the people, and for the people. Such a government is possible only where there is universal intelligence, where confidence is general, and the wealth of the nation is in the hands of the people. Confidence can be only where there is brotherly love, and the wealth of the land will stay in the hands of the people only where there is brotherly love. The safety of a free and happy people is brotherly love. And no wonder the Son of God, Who had our best interests at heart as no one else ever had, boldly and strongly denounced these selfish men, whose lives were a menace to happiness, peace and prosperity.

The Hebrew nation came from the loins of slavery and oppression. The scribes and Pharisees were bitter in their denunciations of the oppressors

of the poor Hebrew slaves, their forefathers two thousand years before, while they themselves were equally as hard task-masters of their own brethren. The Pharisees were also loud in their praises of the prophets, who without exception had denounced the oppression of the poor by the wealthy and strong, and stoutly condemned the men who stoned and put them to death for their reproof. So it is that the Pharisees in one generation always condemn their predecessors in the generations before them. Their cloak of profession calls them to honor and give their approval to those who have exposed and condemned their own lives and conduct in the generations that have gone before. Jesus said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets."

History repeats itself. Human nature in all generations obeys certain great laws. Yet it would seem almost like a wicked attack on the Church to-day to apply Jesus Christ's own rule and words, and say that many men who are now helping to build our fine churches and giving magnificent sums of money to colleges, are the children of the scribes and Pharisees in the days of our Saviour. How these men would disclaim the imputation that if

they had lived in the days of Christ, they would have joined the crowd to carp at Jesus' words and clamor for His condemnation and crucifixion. There is no sin so blinding, both to its possessor and others, and which is so impatient with reproof or warning, and will brook no check or guidance, as the pride and selfishness which wealth and power engender. But in all this they would only be witnesses unto themselves that they are the children of them who condemned and crucified the Lord of glory.

When the Saviour saw the cloud of anger gathering on the faces of the scribes and Pharisees, as He spoke, and heard their maddened retorts, He said to them: "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers;" and then, in bitterness of soul, with the keenest words, exclaimed: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Even He, when there was no one to pity and none mighty to save, Whose arm brought salvation and contrived the way of salvation for sinning and sinful men, could think of no way to save such selfish and hypocritical men.

Jesus further told them: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto

the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."

Think of the awful curse which rested on the fated heads of those scribes and Pharisees; and is it not a heavier curse on men to-day, that upon them may come all the righteous blood, from the blood of righteous Abel till the last moan of the poor, oppressed man, dying up in yonder garret, or the last struggling groans of the expiring girl in the tenement house or gutters of the street?

And now the storm is over and the hard, stony ground has refused to accept the softening rains. The greatest drama of moral courage, of warning, reproof and exhortation, from a heart on fire with the truest, burning love for men, was refused in the most stubborn and bitter anger. And Jesus breaks forth in the most pitiful strain: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

Think of it! The God of heaven in flesh; He by Whom all things were made which are made, and without Whom there was not anything made that was made, saying He would save these men and Jerusalem from their sins and destruction, if He could; but He could not, for they would not.

God created men free agents and in His own image, with power of self-determination and choice of their actions. His control over men's free actions

is commensurate with the love they have for Him, for their fellow-men and their fear to do wrong, from a conscience demanding obedience to the truth. Since God has given man the power of choice in his actions, it would be a violation of His contract with man, made at his creation, to compel his free acts different from his choice, and God cannot lie. Here is the reason of what might appear at first sight to be impotency on the part of our Saviour.

“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” The Saviour’s warnings were ended, but still it seemed as if He could not give them up without announcing their danger, and uttered the prophecy of the downfall and destruction of Jerusalem, saying, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” The despising and forsaking of Jesus was the forsaking of their best friend and interests and the damning of themselves. It was only three days till the people of Jerusalem committed the most atrocious crime mortals were ever guilty of—they crucified the Son of God. In that same generation, Jerusalem suffered the most heart-rending and cruel downfall, with horrid sufferings—the bloodiest picture in the book of time. So quickly did the sins which Jesus reproved, tried to correct and avert in their course, bring ruin and disaster upon the entire people of their nation. Had the common people known the friend they had in Jesus, they would not have left Him, on the day of His condemnation, to be carried

to His cross. They would have thronged about Him, and not all the Roman powers and the power of the temple combined, could have overridden the masses in their demand for His release.

But as subjects will fight and give their lives for the despot who is oppressing them, and as the slave will struggle to maintain the possession and authority his master has over him, so these men, who had only a few days before shouted hosannas to Jesus, as He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, would not permit Him to strike their cruel taskmasters, who in the end became their destroyers.

However harsh anything may have appeared in this chapter, it was all in the service of love. As the husband and father stands at the door of his house, with revolver in hand, aiming death to the robbers who would enter and slay his wife and little ones, it is all love, and noble love, self-sacrificing love, which dictates and prompts his actions. The soldier who sees the life and liberty of his country threatened, and shoulders his knapsack and gun, may seem bloodthirsty and cruel, but his is an act of heroism and love for his country, and for it he nobly offers his life. But never was hero so grand, nor aims so true, nor love so pure in defence of the defenceless, and love for freedom and equal rights to all so great, as that which prompted the Saviour's heart and directed His words as He exposed and uncovered the sins of men which were damning the world, and for which love He went to the cross and gave His life.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

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PETER, PUT UP THY SWORD.

**A**N HOUR or so before Jesus' betrayal, He said unto His disciples, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night." But Peter answered and said, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." And he meant to do exactly what he said he would. It was only a little while till the mob came with torches, swords and staves to take Jesus. Peter's keen eye took in the whole situation. He disdained to attack a weak man, so he watched until Malchus, the high priest's man, was in range. Zip! the sword left the scabbard, a flash in the torchlight, and had the sword gone where it was aimed, Malchus' head would have dropped between his feet. But he only cut off his ear. Peter would have stood by his Master, slaying right and left, till the mob had fallen back or their swords had drunk Peter's lifeblood, and he would have made his words good, "Lord, I will go to prison with thee, or die with thee;" but the Lord reached forth his hand and touched Malchus' ear, and it was made whole, and said to Peter: "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the



sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Peter was confused and his plans in defence of his Master were interrupted. He was checked in doing just what he thought the Lord had accused him of being afraid to do. Peter was at broad sea without a rudder; his Master was being taken by an angry mob, while he by the Master Himself had been made powerless to help and defend Him. Peter lost his balance entirely, and in his bewilderment did wickedly. A sorry night followed to him; in fact, three days and three nights he was plunged into grief.

When the Lord rose from the grave and was first seen by Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, He told them to "go, tell his disciples and Peter." Peter was singled out by special affection of the Lord from all the rest of the disciples. Peter's will was good, and his attempted use of the sword in the defence of his Master was prompted by an honest, heroic heart; but he was in the wrong line of defence. He was still in the gall of bitterness and did not understand the mode of warfare used in the kingdom of heaven—the kingdom of brotherly love. The sword was not the weapon with which the Master fought His battles. The tongue is more powerful than the sword. This is the weapon the Saviour wielded in His mighty contest for the reformation of the world. A few hours before the Saviour's betrayal, referring to

this struggle, He said to Peter : “ Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat : But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not : and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” And the prayer was answered. Peter learned in this trial the lesson. Fifty days afterwards, he stood up before the assembled multitude on the Day of Pentecost, and defended his Master’s cause with a heroism which was never excelled by any general on earth. If he took any thought of himself, he certainly knew that the result of his boldness would, in all probability, cost him his life, and his sufferings would pay the penalty to the enraged scribes and Pharisees, on the same cross which his Saviour’s blood still stained. But God had otherwise ordained, and the effect of the sermon he preached was that three thousand were converted. In recognition of Peter’s boldness, the powers of hell, by God’s almighty intervention, were driven back that day from the territory they had appeared to gain at the crucifixion. From that, till Peter’s dying hour, he was a hero for his Master with his tongue. No bolder hero ever spoke a word ; but never did he again unsheathe his sword for either his or his Master’s defence.

“ Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter : choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.” His heart was all aglow

with sympathy for his oppressed kinsmen. "It came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and, when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand." But Moses was discovered, and had to flee from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian.

After Moses had been forty years in Midian, God called him and appointed him to go to Pharaoh to ask for the deliverance of His people and to make known his high commission as from the great Jehovah. He had then learned the great lesson of trusting in God, and used no more violence, but was the meekest of all men. Though Moses' sympathies were on the right side, he made a mistake by slaying the Egyptian. He loved righteousness, hated oppression, had a burning zeal for the relief of the wronged, but the want of a clear conception of the way God would have His children fight their battles caused him to commit his rash act, which put back the great cause perhaps forty years. God loved him, however, for his pure, unselfish, brotherly love, schooled and guarded him while in Midian and, when the proper time came, honored him with making him the great deliverer of His people.

So our working men have made mistakes, and their mistakes have put back the cause for which

they were fighting. No doubt the Hebrew slaves made many mistakes not recorded. In the wilderness, we read of them being a stiff-necked people. But they were God's children and chosen people on account of their afflictions, wrongs and oppression. "Surely, oppression maketh a wise man mad." Our working people are no worse, certainly, than the Hebrew slaves. They are as much God's chosen people and children as those ancient slaves, and the hardened hearts of the Pharaohs who are wronging them will receive as signal an overthrow, and go down on the pages of history with a more damnable record and merit a deeper hell, for they have sinned against light, light that Pharaoh never saw.

There is a kingly power in an honest man's opinions. That man who loves righteousness, is upright, feareth God and escheweth evil, has a crown placed upon his head by God's own hand. That man will be given words and wisdom which the strongest of the wicked cannot gain-say nor deny. This great battle which we are entering is to be fought with the tongue, sanctified in the service for men, and in meek submission to the will of God. There is nothing this side of hell, which strong, selfish, wicked men so fear, as the tongue of a man who is right, who knows he is right, and is not afraid to use his tongue in defence of the right, laying bare the sins of selfishness and dishonesty, in the fear of God only. And well may they fear him, for he is the servant

of the omnipotent, omniscient God, making their sins to find them out. The tongue of Elijah was more than a match for Ahab, the king, and Jezebel, the queen, together with the four hundred and fifty priests who sat at Jezebel's table. The short sentence, "Thou art the man," from the prophet Nathan, brought David, the king, to see himself in the right light under the truth of God. John the Baptist fought a more effective battle with his tongue than any warrior ever fought on the bloody field of carnage. The tongue of John the Baptist, calling men to "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand," in six months woke up all Palestine. The people of Judea first heard the voice, and gathered on the banks of the river Jordan to be baptized by John. The Jews knew that the wilderness was unholy, and Jerusalem was the place where men ought to worship. But still they went in increasing numbers, drawn and held under the sway of the lips of that great and righteous man. The Son of Mary, the wonderful Son, the carpenter, felt the spell of that voice way up in Nazareth, in the land of Galilee, laid by the plane and chisel, put down the axe and the adze, kissed His mother good-bye, went out from under her roof never again to be her son, and assembled with the multitude on the banks of the Jordan, to be baptized of John. Jesus Christ fought a battle with His lips, of which the twenty-third chapter of Matthew records the hottest part, that is the great opening engagement which

will win the world to God and defeat the powers of hell.

The sword has often been used to defend the right and disenthral truth, and the onward march of freedom has been in the wake of her battles. But after all, the sword is barbarous, and belongs to society in her earlier stages of civilization.

The tongue was the weapon the Son of God used in His battles while upon earth, and He would have His servants do likewise. Then let him who would be a hero in the approaching contest, fear not to use his tongue, save against the weak and defenceless, or for selfish ends ; but use it against the strong, who are oppressing the poor and helpless. Use it not for self. Use it for the right, which needs assistance. Use it for the wrong, which needs resistance. Use it in the service of God, which is for the good of His people. Let him use it, fearing not and heeding not the fact that when he lays bare the true character of the selfishness of wealth, the rich men will call him all the names which would fitly apply to themselves. It was wealthy, aristocratic, highly respected men who called the pure and spotless Jesus a devil, because He was laying bare their sins. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able

to kill the soul : but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

Now is the time for the servants of Jehovah to “ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Soldiers of the living God, take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. “ For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight ; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

Make the sentiment to prevail that wealth is a greater sin than harlotry and drunkenness. Let it be understood that he who robs us of our opportunities in life, the comforts and enjoyments God designed for us, is a worse robber than he who robs us of our money at the midnight hour. Let the rich, in their magnificence, be viewed in the true Christian light, as whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are actually as vile within and as obnoxious to society as the rotten bodies of dead men and all uncleanness are to the physical atmosphere. Let the sweet truth



recorded by the loving disciple John, as he heard it from the tender lips of Jesus, be made the popular sentiment of the business world, that any man who attempts to do business in any other way than Jesus does, the same is a thief and a robber. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." Jesus Christ's way of doing business was not to use His brightest wits to see how many dollars He could rake in for Himself, but to use His great powers in the service of and for the happiness of men. There is nothing so weak and silly in men wearing the image of the true Jehovah as to make wealth their god, unless it be we poor fools who look up to the rich on account of their wealth and the wrongs they do us, almost worship them and are diligent in apologizing for their sins. John says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in Him?"

Let the rich man be viewed in the light of Jesus' teachings, with Christian courage and boldness, and we will turn back the black curse of plutocracy which hangs over our land like a pall. Lay the axe at the root of the tree, and it will come to pass that "every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Some men with

large money holdings will be converted and stand up like Zaccheus, giving away their goods to feed the poor. Let the words of Jesus to the young ruler, Go thy way, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven, be sounded from every pulpit and be the sentiment of every fireside. Let the rich man who turns away from the message go down every avenue of life sorrowing because he is one who has great possessions. Let the doors of Jesus Christ's Church be shut against him until he does it. Let him understand, no matter how full of fulsome flattery his funeral sermon may be spoken by some obsequious minister, that the sermon from the divine lips still stands : in hell, the rich man, being in torment, lifts up his eyes and sees his poorest employes in company with St. Paul, and is begging of Paul to send one of them to the earth and warn his brethren to sell all they have and give it to the poor, that they may not come to that place of torment. Jesus Christ answered the prayer of the rich man in hell by telling the story for him to his brethren. So let the true servant of Jesus Christ continue to echo the prayers in hell of modern departed wealthy sons of the house of God. The Christian minister ought to be the last man to be afraid of a little sharp criticism and fuss when he is in the way of duty. Jesus Christ said, speaking of this, "I came not to send peace, but a sword, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, teaching them to

observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

It is a woeful blunder in the Church to apologize for the selfishness of wealth. The entertainment in and the control rich men have over the Church is the great reason for that alarming gulf between the Church and the masses, which is growing wider, deeper and darker every hour. The poor man may not always be able to define his reason for his aversion to the Church, but he knows there is something wrong with it. The great fact is, the poor do not look upon the Church as their friend and, consequently, stay away from it, and the poor do not have the gospel preached to them. A few may be infidels, but the overwhelming majority look upon Jesus as their friend. The reason they do not unite with the Church called by His name is, doubtless, more or less their sinful hearts ; but, yet, if we could get hold of the great source of the difficulty, we would find that it is the selfish sinning of the rich and those trying to be like the rich, who are representatives of the Church, which has turned them away from the house of God. When Jesus Christ was on the earth, the common people heard Him gladly, and this recognition and acceptance of Him by the common people was the testimony of His divine teachings and His Messiahship, by which He expected every true heart to recognize Him. The same rule applies to-day, and we are bound to regard it.

While it is not expected that ministers are able to look into the hearts of men as Jesus did, yet, with the history of Jesus' dealings with men, the mask has been torn off the hypocrite and, with His rule—by their fruits ye shall know them—there can be no difficulty in knowing the hypocrite, and should be no hesitation by the servants of Jesus Christ in massing the gospel artillery on Satan's strongest works—selfishness in high places, in wealth and power. With the masks so signally torn off the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees by Jesus, it is passing strange that the world should be so fooled again by the same kind of men. Our blindness is far less inexcusable than it was in the men two thousand years ago.

When David, the sweet singer of Israel, saw the rich, "How their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression;" he said, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. It was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

But O! when the sanctuary was in the hands of the rich, as it was when Jesus came to the earth, and the ministers were preaching to be seen of men

and to please the gay and fashionable people, where and how could the slipping feet of the poor find the rock upon which to set their feet and establish their goings?

Of course, ministers ought not to be contentious, bringing railing accusations against those things they know not, but there is no excuse from saying the Lord rebuke thee, when confronted by the same sinners the Lord was, and rebuking them in the same kind of language the Lord did, and then being willing to endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Ministers are to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. They are to become all things to all men to save some, they are to be willing to be spoken against falsely for the sake of Christ, but all these cautions are for them not to selfishly defend themselves, but they are even to forego their own rights, and it is that they may be heroes for the cause of God and man, and speak out boldly the truth, no matter whether men hear or forbear. These very injunctions against contentiousness, self-will and self-defence are to put the soldier of Christ where he can be a hero, bold, daring and faithful in the Master's cause. If to get along smoothly with all men is the prime excellence of a minister's character, then a pet sheep or a good-natured shepherd dog excels all the clergy in ministerial graces. If Jesus Christ's dealings with the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, and His denunciations of them, are not an example for His servants to follow, then why were they written as

part of that perfect life which is given as an example for all men to imitate? If Jesus' last public discourse in the temple, arraigning the scribes and Pharisees in terrible condemnation, is no example for us His servants, then with what extra evidence do we say that His standing at the grave of Lazarus, weeping with Mary and Martha, is a pattern for us? If Jesus does not sustain His servants in boldly defending the poor and the needy, in imitation of Himself, against strong and wicked men, and being willing to go to crucifixion with Him for it, by what proof do we establish the fact that He dries the mourner's tears, sympathizes with us in our sufferings, or is our support in danger, and that He goes down to the grave with us?

Let a man guard well his temper and put all self-interests behind his back. In the fear of God and in imitation of the Master's example, with pure love for the good of men, let him aim deadly blows at the taproot of sin. The storms of the physical world purify the atmosphere and make it healthful. The sun shines brighter on account of them. The flowers, the fruits and the grains grow by the rains they bring. The axe must hew down the forests and the strong plowshare break up the sod of the prairies, to prepare the way for the cultivation of fields to give food for the lives of men. Let the true servant of God use the same broad axe the Saviour used, hewing to the line He has marked, heeding not where the chips may fall.

## CHAPTER XIX.

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### CHRISTIAN COMMUNISM.

**T**HERE is as strong evidence in the Scriptures for the community of property as there is for the Christian Church. While in the garden of Eden the lines of society must necessarily be indistinctly marked, yet everything pointed towards, and was in the line of, the community of property. Society was established in the sweet affection and the community of property between husband and wife, which afterward, in the course of nature, developed into the family, with the relation of brothers and sisters. It is highly probable, if man had not sinned, no other form of government would ever have been known.

When God destroyed the race of mankind, on account of their wickedness, with the flood, He again started the world with Noah and his family, with the laws of the family, or the community of property, and so it would have remained had not sin entered and broken up the family.

In Abraham, God started the patriarchal form of government, which was a community of property. In His second attempt to bring the Jewish people into a body politic, and in establishing them in



Canaan, He did it with a community of property. The people demanded of Him a king, and at their urgent request He granted it, but not until He warned them of the evils which would follow. After a thousand years of sore oppression from their kings, God, apparently hoping that the people were tired of their oppressors, in the fullness of time sent to the world His Son, Jesus Christ.

There is no place in all literature where the oppression of wealth is so strongly condemned, and that each one should live not unto himself, but for the good of others, as is inculcated in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. He gave His life in condemnation of the oppression of wealth, and the night before He did it, in an address more full of affection and love than anything that ever was spoken or written, He told His disciples: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." And again: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of him-

self; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Immediately following these words, in His intercessory prayer, He said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Here Jesus asks that the relation between the Father and the Son (and they are one) may be the relation between men. He also told the disciples that He had many things to say to them, but they could not bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth came, He would guide them into all truth. The passion week was the breaking down of the powers of Satan and preparing the way for the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was without physical form, shape or appearance, and it led men quietly into that which, if attempted in observation, would have met too strong opposition to have been accomplished. So Jesus said, When the Holy Spirit is come, he will reprove the world of righteousness, because I go to the Father. Jesus, the God in flesh, went to heaven and sent to earth God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is without sound of voice, or form, or being. He is an essence, an influence, and if men sin against Him and His work, they sin against brotherly love in its simplicity, without any actions or words of men

which might be misunderstood and so palliate their transgressions. Fifty days after the Saviour uttered these words, the Holy Spirit appeared to the disciples and the multitude which was with them, in mighty demonstration, and the effect of the work was that three thousand were converted, and they which believed had all things in common. In a few days, two thousand more were added to the Church of such as should be saved, and we are told, "When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common."

Two features stood out prominently in this great exhibition of the demonstration of the Holy Spirit as the will of God. The first led to the establishing of the Christian Church, and the second was the community of property—they had all things common. The history of the condition of these early Christians is that great grace was upon them all, that they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved, neither was there any among them that lacked. The Pentecostal revival was a miniature sample of what the society of the world will be when it shall be under

the reign of Jesus Christ. The truth into which the Holy Ghost led the disciples at the Pentecost is of vital importance, and it should be greatly emphasized, in our consideration, by the solicitude the Saviour manifested about it the night before His crucifixion.

All through the Old Testament history, God taught His people by leading them into a condition with the power of His spirit. It was thus: "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel." The Holy Spirit did not command us to establish the Christian Church, nor to adopt the first day of the week, instead of the seventh, as our day of worship, but its leadings were clearly in this direction, and we have been greatly blessed in doing it. But even more clearly and with greater emphasis did the Holy Spirit teach the community of property and show the blessed results, that by it there was abundance for all, and the grace of God gave them favor among the people, the rapid growth of their numbers and large additions to their Church of such as should be saved. It is not recorded that the Holy Spirit in all His dealings with men ever struck down a man or woman in death, save two. These were Ananias and Sapphira. Their sin was that they told a lie, or in modern language, worked a sleek little business deceit against this Christian community, and swift judgment came upon them. Peter said the deceit was a lie, and that it was a lie not unto men, but unto God, that it was a lie that Satan had

breathed into their hearts, and that it was a lie against the Holy Ghost. It was a lie against brotherly love, and the spirit of brotherly love which the Holy Ghost will shed abroad as the reigning influence when the millennium comes.

The night before Jesus' crucifixion, He washed the disciples' feet, as an example for His servants that their lives should be in service one of another, and with the happiness of each other all the time in view. The passover supper, which they were eating, was in commemoration of the deliverance and liberation of the Hebrew slaves. The paschal supper passed away and was supplanted by the Saviour's ordination in the institution of the Lord's Supper that night. This sacrament of the Lord's Supper holds all the virtues of the old paschal, with the added significance of the new. The Lord's Supper is the Magna Charta of liberty for the world. It is the highest mount of ordinance the believer attains to while on earth. Here everything is the purest communism. It is the communion of saints. Anything like an attempt at superiority or dominion here, it would seem, should be met with the same signal reproof by the Holy Spirit that was poured out on the transgressions of Ananias and Sapphira.

Church property is held as a community, and not as a joint stock company. The Church buildings, Church colleges, Church almshouses, belong not to the men whose money built them, but to the Christian community into whose hands the money is

entrusted. No money has ever been made to go so far in the relief of suffering, the building up of society, the education of young men and women, as the money managed under the Christian community of the Church. Ministers are said to be poor financiers, but, notwithstanding, there is no other class of men who make so good an appearance and provide so well for their families, as ministers, on the same amount of salary. The Church is wakening rapidly to a feeling that she has been too circumscribe, and that she must touch the physical world and take a firmer hold of that which is temporal and material. This feeling is taking visible form in the rapidly developing and growing institutional Churches.

There is nothing which God has designed for men in the world that is not under and in the line of a community of interests in property. There is no reason why a railroad or a rolling mill should not be managed in the same way and with the same economy and the same sacredness that the affairs of the Church are. There is no reason why the government of the state should not be managed with as little expense, and with the same high integrity, and more, as the great denominations of the Churches in Conferences, General Assemblies and Associations manage and control their affairs.

There is no place where strong men, able to command, good men, consecrated men, men without deceit, unselfish men, men with the self-sacrificing disposition of the Master, are needed so much as in



the business world, as business men. It is missionary ground. Men going here will need no ordination of men. Let them have sterling integrity, and God, with His own hands, will ordain them and appoint them a field equal to their largest powers, and give them a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. The men going into this field need not expect flowery beds of ease, but must be ready for the beatitudes : "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad : for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." A few such men would be salt in the business world, and their savor would be felt far and wide. The devil, the monopolists and their attaches would be as angry with them as they were with Job.

God has raised up men equal to every emergency, and He will have men who will make the money power tremble on its throne in the contest which is before us. He reined down the fiery Saul of Tarsus and made Paul the Apostle out of him, the most unselfish, self-sacrificing hero for the good of men, and the most like his Master of all who have lived. God can do the same thing for the business world, and He will do it. He has been with us in



six troubles, and He will not forsake us in this the seventh, our last great struggle.

If ever there was a man whose services merited a fortune at the hands of the world, that man was the Apostle Paul. Yet if some of our archæologists should discover that Paul had made a million, or half a million, or any fortune at all out of his missionary labors, we would tear the crown of honor from off his brow and brand him as an impostor and a hypocrite. We admire his logic and endeavor to imitate his eloquence, but it is his unselfish, self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of the good of his fellow-men, which makes him the great apostle. If a minister and the official board of a church would pattern after the business world and steal the property of a church away from the congregation, they would be set down as demons in flesh; and possibly the reason none ever try it is, men are afraid of the timely judgments of Ananias and Sapphira coming upon them if they try their worldly tricks again on the property of the Holy Ghost. Our high honor for the foreign missionary is because he not only gives up the hope of wealth in his avocation, but home, kindred and country, for the good of men he never saw. But if he made a fortune by his missionary work, we would have no such honor for him. It may be answered that these are ministers, and ministers should not be worldly-minded nor seek for wealth. True. But by what right can a business man be any more selfish than a minister, or the Apostle Paul? God

does not have one code of laws for a minister and another one for a business man. Yes, it may be answered, but the Church is sacred and the clergy are ministers of sacred things. Exactly so, and here is the trouble, while the Church is under Jesus Christ's control, though imperfectly, the business world is under the control of the devil, the god of this world. Here is just where the battle is. We want to get the business world out from under the management of the devil, and under the control of Jesus Christ. We want business done no longer in the devil's way, but in Jesus Christ's way. No wonder business men scoff at ministers and say they are not good business men, for when they go into the business world, they cannot get the swing of the devil's tactics. But when a minister does attempt to be smart in business, like business men, he from his high fall usually sinks deeper into the mire than the worst of business men. The devil's way is pomp, power, authority, wealth, oppression, deceit, sharp dealing. But Jesus Christ's plan is to put down all rule and all authority and power, and men will be ruled by the pure Holy Spirit of brotherly love, and every man will be a law unto himself. The social ills which the world is groaning under cannot be relieved by any code of laws or system of government while selfishness dominates the human heart. But brotherly love, pure brotherly love, will cure all our ills, right all our wrongs, and make law unnecessary. Water will never rise higher than its source, so we can

have no perfect standard of love which comes from men, for all men, more or less, are selfish. Jesus Christ, the pure crystallization of love, is our only standard. Love to God, or Jesus Christ, as the standard for love to men, is the whole of the doctrine of sociology and political economy in one sentence.

## CHAPTER XX.

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### THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON.

**A**RMAGEDDON in the Hebrew means the mountain of the gospel, or the mountain of fruits and abundance. The word is used only once in the Scriptures, and that is in the sixteenth chapter of the Revelation to John by the Holy Spirit of those things which will come to pass on the earth. This great battle of Armageddon is prophesied to come in the pouring out of the vial by the sixth angel. The sacred narrative reads thus: "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

The opinion is becoming prevalent, even with the most conservative, that we are at the threshold of wonderful developments. The world has certainly suffered long enough from Satan's oppressions to be ready to rise in the strength of man's integrity and throw off his yoke. The widely diffused Christian intelligence is opening the eyes of men to see their wrongs and know that the times are ominous with foreboding evil. On every side there are the crystallizations of smaller lines of trade and manufactories into larger ones, so that the work may be done by less men, and the goods laid upon the counters at a lower figure. Men with a small business have to increase their trade or works and handle a larger volume to make the same profits. Machinery is brought into requisition at every available point, so that one man now does the work of several men a few years ago. Men are arranged in large establishments, so that every one works to the best advantage and no time is lost by any. This unloosing of the pent-up powers of nature and the organization of labor, the fruits of the quickened Christian intellect, are generally seized in their infancy by selfish and strong men to build up fortunes, instead of ministering to the comforts of the masses. The corruption of business on every hand, the deepening of poverty, the approaching dark storm-cloud of plutocracy, are rumors of misery, bloodshed and war such as the world has never witnessed before. When God created the world, He spake and it was done, He

commanded and it stood fast, and by the power of His word the universe moves on to-day. Man, whom He created in His own image, as far as possible is to be like Him, in that he is to live without servile toil and bid nature do the work for him; and it will obey him, when Satan's fetters are broken off. This prostitution of the fruits of Christian developments of the world by selfish men, in obedience to the devil, to build up fortunes and rob the masses, has had its day and must soon fall. Men are not going to wait till the full tide of the curse is upon us. It is enough to know it is approaching, to arouse men to the rescue of the coming generation and themselves from the threatening danger.

The gospel is already preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and Jesus told us: Then shall the end come. While the foreign missionary work has been pushed forward, a silent influence has caused the name of Jesus among the masses at home to become almost universally popular. This is something which never was so before. Neither were the people in foreign fields ever with hearts so open and ready to receive the gospel. "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

When Jesus was upon the earth, the common people thronged Him, and pressed one against another to hear the gracious words which proceeded from His lips. The same truth has like influence upon the hearts of men in all ages. The kind senti-

ment in the hearts of the common people all over the land to Jesus Christ is the preparation by the Holy Spirit of the people, as He inspired the Hebrew slaves to assemble under the leadership of Moses and go out of their house of bondage. It is the salt of the earth gaining its savor, that the world may be seasoned. It is the light of the world, kindled by Jesus Christ and being placed upon the candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. This rising popularity of Jesus among the masses is the sound of the going in the tops of the mulberry trees, bidding us to go out to battle, for God hath gone forth before us to smite the hosts of sin. They are the doves, as a cloud, flying to their windows, which Isaiah saw. It is the coming realization of Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones in the valley, of bone coming to bone. The flesh will come upon these bones, skin will cover them over, the breath of the spirit of the heavenly Master's brotherly love will fill their hearts, and there will stand upon their feet an exceeding great army. "Arise, shine: for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

The eyes of the disciples were holden that they could not understand their Master and His mission, till after His death, burial, resurrection and He was about to ascend up into heaven; then they understood the Scriptures that He must be crucified, buried and rise again. So the eyes of the people have been holden, but the time is dawning when Jesus shall be recognized in His true love and light.



The world no longer demands new statements of theological doctrines, but asks for the person of Jesus Christ.

The life of Jesus, presented with all its practical bearings on the everyday side of life, is what is wanted. Commensurate with and far exceeding the breaking away from the old forms of belief and doctrines formulated by men, there is an increasing demand that the life of Jesus Christ shall be preached as it is found in the gospels, without additions or toning down hard places to suit anyone. The desire is that Jesus shall live in His followers, and so move among us, that professing Christians may be living epistles, read and known of all men. Professions of piety are being put to the test, and what men really are is emphatically becoming the world's criterion of goodness or Christian character. Christian is almost universally now held by the masses as a synonym for all that is good and lovely, while Church membership is taken for what it is really worth in the individual who wears it.

Consequent and akin to the aspirations that Jesus Christ be so held before the world that we shall see Him living with us and in us, we hear the battle cry sounding all through the land, that Jesus Christ, in the person of His true followers, must come again, face to face with the arch-enemy, whom He met and who crucified Him eighteen hundred years ago. There will doubtless be a storm when the great fact is brought to bear upon men

that they can no longer practice all these kinds of wrongs upon the poor and defenceless, then make long prayers, pay tithes of mint, anise, cummin, and for it be canonized as saints in the Church. The time is near when men who pretend to take Jesus as their leader must manage their business as Jesus did, or they will be denounced by all as hypocrites, serpents, a generation of vipers who cannot escape the damnation of hell. The great realities of Jesus Christ's last public discourse are as true and as applicable to-day as when they pierced the ears of those wealthy, self-righteous men in the temple of God. These great divine truths are fast wakening in the souls of the people, and the moans of the poor and defrauded have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and Jesus will never allow the agitation to cease, nor will His soldiers lay down their arms, till business squares itself to, and patterns itself after, His great plan of redemption. Sure as the Lord God liveth, He will bring it to pass.

Soon doubting Thomas will doubt no more and heroic Peter will no longer fail to comprehend His Lord's mode of warfare, but will stand upon that greater than the Pentecostal day, with heroism like the Master's, and instead of three thousand being born into the kingdom of God, ten thousand and ten thousand will declare their allegiance to Jesus in a single day. Much as may be said about the hypocrisy and inconsistencies of Church members, and great as the sins of many are, yet there

are a host in the Church like Simeon of old and Anna the prophetess, who are waiting for the redemption of Israel, and will recognize the Saviour and His gospel in simple love, brotherly love for all men. The gospel in eighteen hundred years has wrought a great change in the condition, intelligence and influence of the common people. No change has been so great as that of the last century, and that of the last quarter has been by far the most marked. The momentum of increasing strength augurs the gathering of the forces of God Almighty without delay to battle in the valley of Armageddon. With all the Church's shortcomings and faults, she has been the watch-tower which has kept the light burning to direct the way for the mariner on the sea of life. However conservative ministers may be, and however much they may hesitate to adopt new ways, yet when they are fully convinced of what is their duty, there is no class of men who can be depended upon to so forget their own interests and sacrifice so much for the good of their fellow-men, as they. On the other hand, he who from their number proves himself to be selfish, and shirks his duty of service to his fellow-men, is the blackest of the train of hypocrites on earth.

Opposed to Jesus are the devil, his angels and selfish men, battling against brotherly love, goodwill, peace and plenty for all men. The devil and his angels were created holy and happy in heaven, free agents, with the power of self-determination

and choice of action. The dominion of will, which God recognizes and respects in men always, and which men of all things would surrender last, God consistently regards in Satan and his angels. But the history of God with men is that He has always placed man on vantage-ground over Satan, assuring him that the great omnipotent Jehovah is his friend, would fight his battles for him, if man would only allow Him to do so, and, finally, lead him out into green pastures where the living waters flow. In this great battle of Armageddon, the hearts of the common people will be won by the transcendent merits of Jesus and His truth. The victory will result in the common people coming "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." But they who have had brotherly love burnt out of their hearts by selfishness, and become seared as with a hot iron, life gone like the igneous rocks; them the power of God's condemning truth will strike blow after blow, grinding them into powder, as the rocks of the elemental world were ground by almost almighty forces, making the sand and soil for the habitation of man and beast.

Satan is the author of all disease, sickness, death, sin, ignorance, debauchery, vice; in fine, everything which is evil comes from the devil, and is perpetuated in the world and intensified by the assistance of men. On the other hand, Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light by His gospel. God

created man perfect. He was physically without a weakness or tendency to sin, sickness or death. When Jesus came to the world, He took to Himself a perfect body. He never had one moment of sickness or pain which came from within. He even declared of the life in His physical body: "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." Peter told the people on the Day of Pentecost that "God loosed the bonds of death" which held Him in the tomb, "because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." The evangelists sum up the merits of Jesus' life by saying that "he went about teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sicknesses, and all manner of disease among the people." When Peter became convinced of the absolute brotherhood of all men, he expressed his convictions by saying, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him." Paul says: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." When Jesus was on earth, He never attended a funeral, for it was impossible; He would have taken the dead man out of the coffin before the funeral had time to begin. When He was taken into the room where the little daughter of Jairus lay dead, His first words were, "Talitha, cumi; which

is, being interpreted, Damsel (I say unto thee), arise." He met the funeral procession bearing the widow's son, of Nain, to burial, "and when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." When Jesus was taken by Lazarus' sisters to his grave, it is said, "Jesus wept!" This was happily made the shortest verse in the Bible, for that weeping was doubtless very short. Over the protest of Martha that "he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days," Jesus commanded them, "Take away the stone," and His pent-up sympathies while waiting, broke forth, as "he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." Wherever He went, the lame, the sick and diseased, the blind, the deaf, thronged Him to be healed, and He never turned any away, but, on the other hand, often asked for the privilege of loosing those who were thus bound by Satan in sickness, disease and death. What a strange doctrine is that which some teach as good theology, that Jesus has anything to do with sending death or disease into our homes, as His chastisements upon us. Let them show where, when He was upon the earth, He ever made a man sick, or lame, or blind, or killed anyone, or else cease their slandering of our Jesus. Mothers knew by womanly instinct that their babes were safe in His arms and that they would get them back again, and with



blessings on their heads. Jesus does all that can be done to relieve pain and sorrow, enlarge our comforts and joys, and not at the same time take away our dominion and freedom of choice. As long as men choose the cause of woe, it is not possible to shield them from its effects and results. But, when Satan worries and torments the sheep of Jesus' fold with sickness and pain, Jesus has such a wonderful way of coming to the distressed ones with blessings, that the blessings outweigh the sorrow, and we say: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." When Satan with death takes away our friends, Jesus comes and takes the spirit as it is disembodied and carries it away to heaven's bright life of light and love, where Satan never again can annoy. It is a thousand times more blest where Jesus is; and so He shows Himself infinitely more than a match for Satan.

Jesus' miracles were not, as Hume said, a violation of the laws of nature, neither were they a subjugation of the laws of nature, as our theologians tell us; but they were the unloosing of nature from the fetters Satan tied about it, and from which it was groaning to be delivered. For we know that the whole creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, which will be accomplished in the great battle of Armageddon. What



were the miracles of the few loaves and fishes, but the untying of nature, to let her exert the power God put into her at the creation? What were the opening of the eyes of the blind, the unstopping of deaf ears, the unloosing of tied tongues, the calling the dead to life, but the unloosing of Satan's fetters from men and restoring them to the place for which nature had created them? The miracles were the establishing of the laws of nature and restoring them free from the curse of Satan. The miracles are glimpses of what nature will do for us when man throws off his service to Satan, stops his selfish sinning, and swears allegiance to brotherly love and Jesus Christ. We now see the meaning of our Saviour's words the night before His crucifixion, when He said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Oh, how pregnant with meaning is the petition in our Lord's Prayer, And deliver us from evil, the powers and the fetters of the evil one; and we put ourselves under Him so that He can do it for us. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." The movements of the last century are an object lesson that nature is waiting for us, bursting with plenty for all; and the development of our generation over our ancestors of a few centuries ago is an earnest that we may and will, under the influence of brotherly love, rise to men and women of whom we now know not.

With God on our side, we should fear nothing. You see that man with checked shirt and blue drilling overalls, standing on the cab of yonder engine, with a quarter of a mile of freight cars attached to his locomotive. A thousand men, with

crowbars, cant hooks and handspikes, could not move the train along. But there is a wave of the lantern by a man near the caboose, the engineer takes hold of the lever, opens the throttle, the great engine begins to belch forth its steam and smoke, the train moves slowly along the track; at first, she seems to crawl, but faster and faster she moves, until she flies over the steel track at the rate of more than twenty miles an hour. This was all accomplished by the man on the locomotive complying with God's revealed, ordained law of the strength of steel and the power of steam. What fools we preachers are, standing on the floor of the engine of God's sacred desk, pulling away with rhetoric, grammar, science, polemic theology, higher criticism, profane history, philosophy, esthetics, popular themes, and every modern appliance the wits of man can devise to catch the attention of the masses, when God's own engine of almighty truth lies on the sacred desk, spread open before us. Oh, why not comply with God's revealed divine law! Teach the gospel, "Not with fleshly wisdom," "Not with excellency of speech or of wisdom," "Not with the wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "Our sufficiency is of God." Oh, why not open the throttle of the inspired word, and let the whole power of divine truth take hold of the people?

In the battle of Armageddon, "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God," will be unsheathed and wielded to its entire length; "for the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than

any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Old Archimedes used to say, if he had a place to put his fulcrum and a lever long enough, he could lift the world. The fulcrum is the Bible, the lever is the cross, and the modern Archimedes is the tongue of the common people speaking forth the love there is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The great battle of Armageddon will be the greatest and fiercest ever fought by the sons of men on earth. Slavery was as the killing of a dog, despotism the slaying of a wolf; while the money power is the fiercest and most cruel tiger that prowls the forests of sin. But the Lion of the tribe of Judah, in that great contest on the battlefield of Armageddon, will lay the monster bleeding, dying and dead at His feet, and brotherly love shall triumph gloriously that day, over selfishness and sin. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." On the field of Armageddon, under Jesus Christ's sweet influence and example, men will choose brotherly love and renounce selfishness in every form. Then will the powers of Satan be loosed from nature; the devil will be driven out of the world, and God will bind him and "cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled."\*

Isaiah, with a vision of things to come as clear as John's on the Isle of Patmos, wrote of this time: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break

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\* Rev. xx., 3.

forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”\* “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”† “They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.”‡ “They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.”§ “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”|| And Jesus “shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.”

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\*Is. lv., 12, 13. †Is. xi., 6, 9. ‡Is. lxx., 22, 20, 21. §Micah iv., 3, 4. ||Rev. vii., 17.





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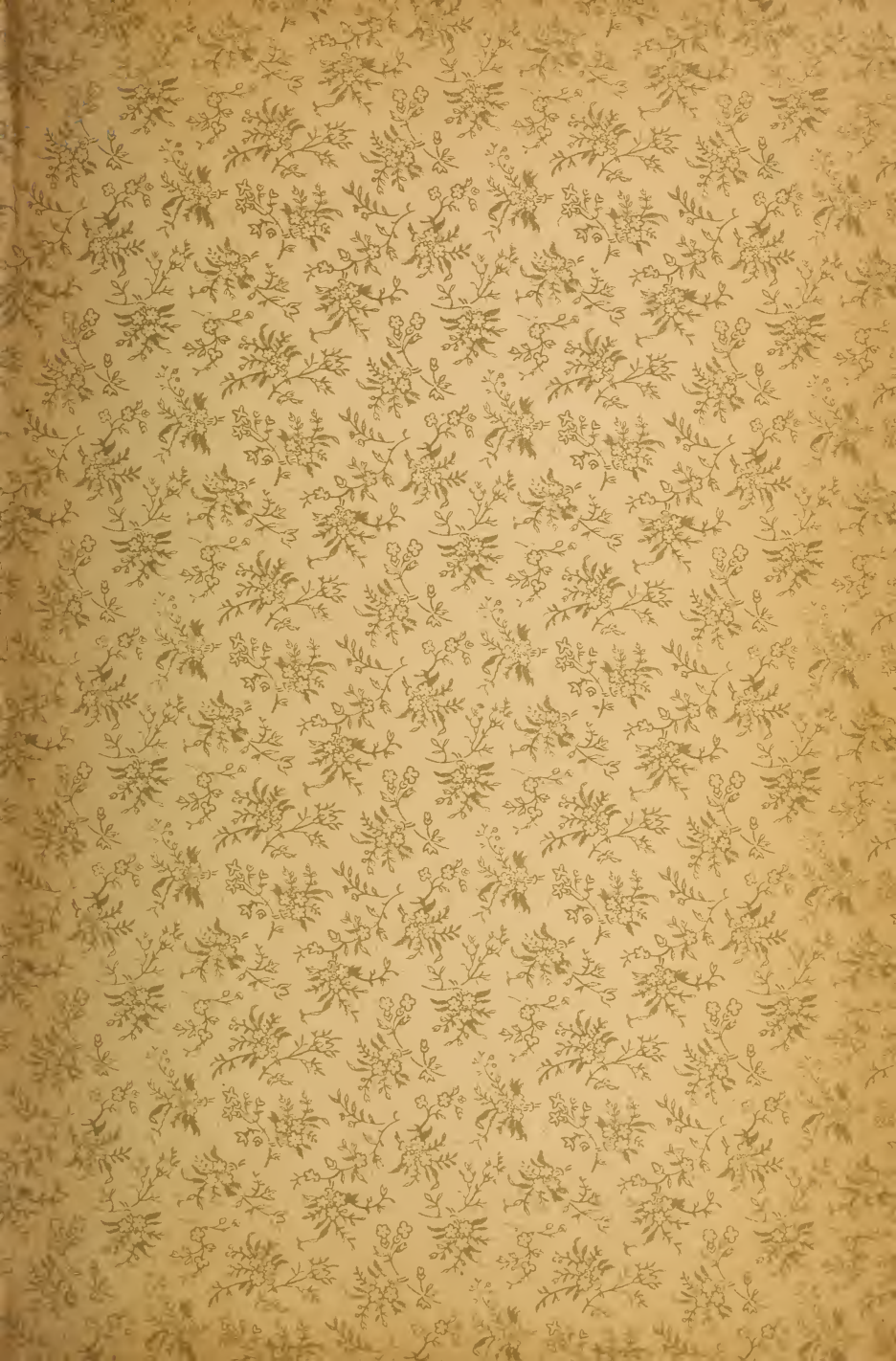




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